

April 7 protesters say 'U.S. hands off Cuba'



Militant/Janet Post

Marchers in New York on April 7 called for "U.S. hands off Cuba!" in the largest action in city in defense of Cuba since 1960s.

BY SELVA NEBBIA

NEW YORK — Demanding "U.S. hands off Cuba!" and "Stop TV Martí!" 1,500 people marched here on April 7 to protest

See editorial on page 14.

Washington's most recent provocations against Cuba.

The action, called by the U.S. Hands Off Cuba Coalition, assembled at Times Square in mid-Manhattan and, after a brief rally,

marched some 12 blocks for a second rally in front of the offices of the Cuban mission to the United Nations.

"This is one of the largest demonstrations we have ever had in defense of Cuba," said Angel Cuesta, a member of Casa de las Américas, one of the 60 sponsoring organizations. The action was the largest one of its kind to take place here since the protests against President John Kennedy's blockade of Cuba during the October 1962 "missile crisis."

"TV Martí has been a big failure," said

Cuesta. "The Cuban people have been able to jam it and say, 'We will not be brought to our knees, but if we are it will be to take aim.'"

On March 27 Washington began test broadcasts of TV Martí, a U.S.-government financed effort to transmit on one of Cuba's domestic TV channels. Within minutes Cuban technicians successfully jammed the TV signal and have prevented every attempt to transmit since then.

Two blocks away from the "U.S. Hands Off Cuba" action, ultra-right Cuban exile organizations held a counterdemonstration. Organizers of this action had openly stated they would prevent the march from taking place.

In the days leading up to the action, messages from a broad range of individuals and organizations were sent to Mayor David Dinkins urging him to insure the democratic rights of the "Hands Off Cuba" demonstrators in the face of these threats.

On the day of the event a cordon of police in riot gear stood between the two groups. Some 200 coalition security marshals made

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Curtis appeals for new trial in frame-up

BY PETER THIERJUNG

DES MOINES, Iowa — Mark Curtis Defense Committee supporters announced at an April 12 news conference here that a decision is expected soon in Curtis' appeal of his 1988 frame-up conviction on rape and burglary charges. The decision from the Iowa Court of Appeals could be handed down within the next two months.

"Mark's appeal is a powerful indictment of an unfair trial. One of the appeal's strongest foundations rests on the fundamental constitutional right to confront and cross-examine one's accusers, a right denied Curtis," said John Studer, the defense committee coordinator. "For this and other reasons, his conviction should be overturned."

Studer was joined at the news conference by longtime Des Moines Black rights activist Edna Griffin; political activists Robert and Nellie Berry; defense committee treasurer Julia Terrell; Héctor Marroquín, a unionist and fighter for immigrant rights; and Sandra Nelson, a leader of the defense committee.

"It is crucial to mobilize public opinion now," said Griffin, "especially in the Black community." She, along with the others present, reaffirmed her commitment to win justice for Curtis.

Curtis, a Des Moines unionist and political activist, is currently incarcerated at the Iowa State Men's Reformatory in Anamosa. His frame-up conviction stems from his participation in defense efforts on behalf of 17 Mexican and Salvadoran coworkers who were arrested during a March 1, 1988, raid by Immigration and Naturalization Service agents at the Swift meat-packing company here.

Arrested by Des Moines police in the evening of March 4, 1988, Curtis had participated in a meeting a few hours earlier to organize protests against the government's victimization of the immigrant workers. "This frame-up on false charges was politically motivated to intimidate myself and others from political and union activities," Curtis said in a statement for the news conference sent from prison.

Following his arrest, Curtis was severely beaten at the police station by officers who called him a "Mexican-lover, just like you love those coloreds." He suffered a shattered cheekbone and required 17 stitches. Curtis was found guilty in a September 1988 trial before the District Court of Polk County and was sentenced to 25 years in state prison.

Lylea Critelli, one of Curtis' attorneys,

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May 3 labor rally set to back New York strikers

BY SUSAN LaMONT

Machinists on strike at Eastern Airlines, striking Greyhound workers, and other unionists in New York are mapping plans for a citywide labor solidarity rally May 3. The rally will mobilize support for the Eastern and Greyhound strikers, for garment workers fighting for union recognition at Domsey Trading Co. in Brooklyn, and for workers at the *Daily News*, who face a tough fight against the *News'* drive to break the unions there.

The May 3 labor march and rally will begin at 4:30 p.m. at 41st Street and Eighth Avenue in Manhattan, where Greyhound strikers in the Amalgamated Transit Union maintain their picket lines at the huge Port Authority bus terminal. The march will proceed at 5:30 p.m. to Rockefeller Center for a rally at Eastern's midtown ticket office at 49th Street and Fifth Avenue.

"We've been able to sustain our fight for 14 months and grow stronger because of the support and solidarity of other unions," said Emie Mailhot, an Eastern strike leader from International Association of Machinists Local 1018 at New York's La Guardia Airport. "The May 3 rally will give us a chance to reach thousands more working people in New York with the message that our strike is going strong and our struggle — and that

of Greyhound strikers, Domsey strikers, and the *Daily News* workers — is in the interests of all working people, whether they're union members or not."

'Night of 100 Stars'

While plans for the May 3 rally were getting off the ground, unionists in the entertainment industry helped Eastern strikers score another victory. The Actors' Fund decided to cancel participation by Frank Lorenzo in its "Night of 100 Stars" benefit, set for May 5 at Radio City Music Hall in New York.

Each year a major benefit is held in New York to raise money for the Actors' Fund, a charity that provides financial assistance, job placement aid, nursing home care, and other services for actors, writers, and others in show business. This year the "Night of 100 Stars" gala is slated to raise funds for the AIDS programs of the Actors' Fund. In the past the benefit has had the support of the entertainment industry unions.

When the benefit was announced last month, Lorenzo, chairman of Eastern's parent company Texas Air Corp., was listed in a full-page *New York Times* ad as a member of the event's executive committee, along with dozens of other corporate bigwigs and

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Week two of British prison takeover

BY BRIAN GROGAN

LONDON — Displaying a large banner on the roof declaring themselves "Plebeius, of the common people," prisoners at Manchester's Strangeways prison are into their second week of an occupation of the facility. This is the longest prisoner uprising in modern British history.

The actions of the Strangeways prisoners have highlighted the barbaric conditions in British prisons and touched off protests and occupations in at least 13 other establishments — notably at Dartmoor and Bristol prisons in the south of England.

Britain has a larger number of prison inmates per capita than any other European country (although only half as many as in the United States), and the rate of growth has accelerated since the mid-1980s.

Currently, there are 46,500 prisoners in

128 prisons, increasingly concentrated in the 17-25 age group. According to Home Office statistics, nearly 14 percent of the prison population in 1986 was from national minorities who constitute somewhat over 3 percent of the population.

The annual report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector for Prisons admitted that in many prisons, inmates were forced to exist "in conditions which offend against any reasonable standards of decency." In response to the uprisings Robert Runcie, archbishop of Canterbury — the head of the Church of England, has denounced "the disgraceful conditions in some of Britain's prisons."

Strangeways was built in 1868 for 970 prisoners but now houses some 1,600. As a result, in many instances three prisoners were being held in cells originally designed for

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Yakima area sales teams sign up farm workers

BY ROBBIE SCHERR

SEATTLE — "Hey, remember me from last year's farm workers' convention?" someone called out in Spanish to a member of a *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* sales team canvassing his neighborhood in Yakima, Washington. Gregorio, a

drop to the interest in the periodicals is the increase in union activity recently in preparation for the opening of the asparagus harvest this month.

Round one of the effort to confront the asparagus growers and other agribusinessmen in the Yakima Valley was a UFWWS in-

ers marched on the growers, another five workers bought subscriptions to *Perspectiva Mundial* and one signed up for the *Militant*.

Following the demonstration a team of three from Seattle; Portland, Oregon; and Vancouver, British Columbia, stayed in the Yakima Valley for two days selling the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* and building the UFWWS convention.

One young worker on his way into the afternoon shift at Iowa Beef Processors in Wallula, Washington, readily bought a subscription to *Perspectiva Mundial*. By the end of the shift change 10 others had picked up single copies of the publications and a delivery truck driver signed up for the *Militant*.

The next day the team staffed tables at Yakima Valley Community College and Heritage College on the Yakima Indian reservation.

Along with some door-to-door canvassing and sales at the farm workers health clinic in Toppenish, Washington, a total of 10 *Perspectiva Mundial* and five *Militant* subscriptions were sold by the two-day team.

On April 1, some 250 participants attended the UFWWS convention in Sunnyside. Among those present

were union supporters from throughout the Pacific Northwest. Two farm workers bought *Perspectiva Mundial* subscriptions and 28 others bought a copy of the so-

cialist monthly.

Another team to the Yakima Valley will hit the road April 12-17 to get a jump start on the international target week that begins April 14.



GETTING THE MILITANT AROUND

member of the United Farm Workers of Washington State (UFWWS) recognized the Spanish-language monthly *Perspectiva Mundial* as well as the salesperson. He then got in his truck, took the team to his house and signed up for a subscription.

Gregorio is one of 24 Yakima Valley residents who have become new readers of *Perspectiva Mundial* or the *Militant* since the seven-week international sales drive began March 17. In addition, two UFWWS executive committee members renewed their subscriptions. The back-

tervention into Washington State legislative hearings on child labor held in March. Sixty-five farm workers — both children and adults — packed the hearings at the state house in Olympia to fight for relief from the barbaric practice of child labor that is widespread in agriculture.

Three participants subscribed to the *Perspectiva Mundial* while milling around the state house during the hearings.

At a March 25 demonstration organized by the union in Sunnyside, Washington, where 450 farm work-



Militant/K.C. Ellis

Union farm workers' convention in Sunnyside, Washington, April 1. Two workers there signed up to get *Perspectiva Mundial*, adding to the 22 new readers of *PM* and the *Militant* won in the Yakima Valley during the current subscription drive.

Socialist candidate files petitions in W. Virginia

BY LINDA JOYCE

CHARLESTON, W.Va. — Socialist Workers Party candidate for state attorney general Clay Dennison filed 716 pages of petitions here April 9 calling on Secretary of State Ken Hechler to waive the filing fees for the slate of socialist candidates in the 1990 elections. Dennison is running with Dick McBride, SWP candidate for U.S. Senate, and Maggie McCraw, SWP candidate for state treasurer.

"What amounts to pocket change for the Democrats and Republicans," said Dennison, a coal miner, "is a big chunk of money for people who work." West Virginia's undemocratic election restrictions forced the socialists to collect well over the 3,650 signature requirement or pay some \$2,000 to place their names on the ballot.

A 45-minute debate followed as reporters questioned Hechler, his chief of staff, and staff attorney on the right of third parties and independent candidates to be on the ballot. The secretary of state left after a short while but the discussion continued.

"Why is it if I sign a petition to allow socialists on the ballot for the general election," asked one reporter, "that I lose my right

to vote in the primary elections?"

Robert Wilkinson, attorney for the secretary of state, replied that a signature on the socialist's petitions constituted a "vote."

"You mean signing a petition on a street corner equals a vote?" said the reporter in disbelief. The state's representatives maintained that it did.

Dennison demanded that the petition be

accepted for all three candidates. "But just in case there is any foot dragging, I am paying the \$504 filing fee for myself under protest, fully expecting a favorable reply and the money returned." The state has said that the more than 4,000 signatures collected, if accepted, would only be sufficient to place McBride on the ballot and that the other two candidates would need an additional 3,650

signatures each.

The *Register-Herald* in Beckley, West Virginia, a coal-mining center, editorialized against the ballot restrictions on March 31. "The law clearly gives Democrats and Republicans an extreme advantage over any contenders. That isn't surprising, because the law is the product of those two parties," the paper said.

North Carolina socialists launch campaign

BY JANE ROLAND

GREENSBORO, N.C. — Rich Stuart, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate, announced his campaign here April 5, standing in front of Bates Nightwear, a garment shop scheduled to close in June. "We're campaigning here," Stuart explained, "to point to the recent wave of mill and plant closings and the turmoil these closings will bring to thousands of workers and their families."

Several Bates workers — who talked with Stuart when they came outside during their lunch break — told him they had no idea

what they would do when the plant shuts down. Recently Cone, Milliken, Guilford, and Dacotah textile companies have announced major plant closings in North and South Carolina and Georgia.

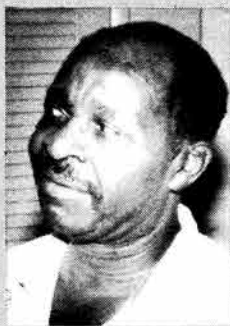
Stuart, a rail worker, is a member of United Transportation Union Local 783 and an active supporter of the Machinists strike at Eastern Airlines. He is running for the senate seat currently held by Republican Jesse Helms.

Stuart's first act as the SWP senatorial candidate was to send a letter congratulating

Darryl Hunt, a young Black man from Winston-Salem who had been framed up on murder charges but was found innocent by an all-white jury at the end of March.

Stuart pointed to the gains made by Cuba's workers and farmers as an example for working people here. "I believe that the miserable conditions that millions of the world's people live under, including here in North Carolina, prove that the current rulers of this system are unfit to rule," Stuart said. "We need a new kind of society, a new international economic order, that puts humanity before profits."

'I've been struggling for 23 years to build my union. Since subscribing to the *Militant* I've learned a lot from people all over the world struggling to do the same. People should buy a subscription and read it.'



ERNEST COTTLE

Shop steward, Machinists Lodge 1126, Miami

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The Militant

Closing news date: April 11, 1990

Editor: DOUG JENNESS

Circulation Director: RONI McCANN

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Published weekly except the last two weeks of December by the Militant (ISSN 0026-3885), 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014. Telephone: Editorial Office, (212) 243-6392; Fax 727-0150; Telex, 497-4278; Business Office, (212) 929-3486. Nicaragua Bureau, Apartado 2222, Managua. Telephone 24845.

Correspondence concerning subscriptions or changes of address should be addressed to The Militant Business Office, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014.

Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y., and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Militant, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014. Subscriptions: U.S., Latin America: for one-year subscription send \$37, drawn on a U.S. bank, to above address. By first-class (airmail), send \$70. Canada: send Canadian \$50 for one-year subscription to Société d'Éditions AGPP, C.P. 340, succ. R, Montréal, Québec H2S 3M2. Britain, Ireland, Africa: £28 for one year by check or international money order made out to Militant Distribution, 47 The Cut, London, SE1 8LL, England. Continental Europe: £35 for one year by check or international money order made out to Militant Distribution at above address. Australia, Asia, Pacific: send Australian \$60 to Pathfinder Press, P.O. Box 259, Glebe, Sydney, NSW 2037, Australia.

Signed articles by contributors do not necessarily represent the Militant's views. These are expressed in editorials.

New York meeting discusses Panama

Aftermath of U.S. invasion described

BY LUIS MADRID

NEW YORK — "The massacre of El Chorrillo, Colón, and San Miguelito is a crime against humanity. It is Grenada; it is Vietnam," said Olga Mejía before an attentive audience of 1,600. She was describing the first few hours of the U.S. invasion of Panama last December.

Mejía was one of the panelists at the Voices From Panama rally in solidarity with the Panamanian people called by the Independent Commission of Inquiry on the U.S. Invasion of Panama at Town Hall theater on April 5. She is president of the Panamanian National Commission on Human Rights.

In El Chorrillo, a community in Panama City of about 20,000 people, "five complete blocks were bombed," Mejía said, "completely leveled and turned into a natural holy ground." She described the high-powered weaponry and the behavior of the invading forces. "Many of those who came out running away from the fires and the bombings died, machine-gunned down by the U.S. troops," she recalled.

"We need to see that it never happens again. We have to resolve it should never happen again: not in Panama, not in Nicaragua, not in Cuba, not in Haiti... nowhere," said Ramsey Clark.

Recounting his January trip to Panama, the former U.S. attorney general and a commission steering committee member referred to the many victims whose whereabouts are still unknown. "The grave that I saw was 18 feet wide — six paces... 120 feet long — 40 paces. It hadn't been filled in for 26 more paces and the unfilled part was five feet deep," he said. "Tragically, we need to have a body count. The families are entitled to know what has happened to their loved ones."

Early in the meeting Gavrielle Gemma, commission project director and the event's chair, announced that the meeting was sold out and a sound system had been set up for the couple of hundred people outside who could not get in.

The commission was formed in mid-January 1990 due to the scarce information available to the people in the United States regarding "the extent of the death and destruction and the reality of life in Panama in the aftermath of the invasion."

Made up of prominent human rights and trade union activists, clergy, and others, the commission visited Panama and gathered statements and accounts from Panamanian victims of the invasion, including those who were jailed, had relatives killed, were made homeless, or suffered other human rights abuses or indignities.

Teresa Gutierrez, associate director, spoke on behalf of the commission at the event.

"They would like for us to forget this barbaric act, but tonight showed that we will not allow that," Gutierrez said. She also described the campaigns the commission has carried out on behalf of Panamanian activists jailed since the invasion and the role played by the commission in getting out the truth about the invasion and the current situation facing Panamanians.

The invasion has meant "the reimposition of apartheid in Panama," said Robert Knight, as he urged the audience for funds. Knight, a steering committee member, had received the George Polk Award the previous day for his radio coverage of the invasion on WBAI's *Undercurrent*. What they do not tell you, Knight pointed out, is that Polk became known for uncovering the U.S. and British involvement in the Greek civil war. Knight added that he had challenged other reporters as to why they went along with the news blackout on the invasion and its aftermath.

By the end of the evening hundreds of dollars had been raised for the commission's work.

Arnaldo Ramos, representative of the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN), received an enthusiastic response when he spoke about the "progress" made in the most recent negotiations — mediated by a representative of UN Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar — between the FMLN and the government of El Salvador in Geneva, Switzerland.



YOUTH in front of República El Salvador school in El Chorrillo, Panama City, now housing residents left homeless after December U.S. invasion. "Five complete blocks were bombed," said panelist at April 5 meeting on Panama in New York.

A message of support to the commission from Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas, leader of Mexico's Party of the Democratic Revolution and its candidate in the last presidential elections in that country, was also read.

Esmeralda Brown, Waldaba Stewart, and other commission members were on stage. There were also representatives of different Panamanian groups — the Voices From Panama, Héctor Aleman from the public employees federation FENASEP; Edilma Icaza, a Kuna indigenous leader; Graciela Dixon, law-

yer for the war refugees from El Chorrillo; and others.

During the evening, Gemma acknowledged the presence of Margarita Delgado, first secretary of the Cuban Mission to the UN; representatives of the South West Africa People's Organisation of Namibia; a delegation of transit workers currently on strike against Greyhound; and several other prominent activists.

Commission member Valerie Van Isler contributed to this article.

Cuban youth protest U.S. broadcasts

BY SETH GALINSKY

HAVANA, Cuba — At a midnight rally on April 3, tens of thousands of young people here celebrated the 28th anniversary of the founding of the Union of Communist Youth (UJC) and protested attempts to start up TV Martí, a U.S.-government financed station designed to broadcast over Cuban domestic television channels.

"The Yankees think they are going to defeat us with a little television screen," Roberto Robaina, UJC first secretary, stated to the laughter of the crowd, "something they have not been able to do with the blockade, threats, and aggression."

"They would be better off flying kites in Florida," he added, referring to the balloon-like aerostat used to beam TV Martí to the island from Florida.

According to Robaina, the U.S. govern-

ment is divided over continuing TV Martí. Millions of dollars have already been spent on the project, but the Cubans have successfully jammed every transmission since the station started up on March 27.

Some circles in the United States believe that TV Martí is a failure and that all it has done is unite the Cuban people more than ever, Robaina stated.

'Let the tourists come'

"These gentlemen think that since Cuba cannot be made to give in by force, the most important thing is to establish relations, offer us the heavenly society, send us their tourists, and introduce their propaganda, and then we will fall down and surrender at their feet," Robaina said.

"If they think they are going to break us with tourists, let them come," he added. "It just might backfire on them. Maybe the North American tourists themselves might ask for asylum to be able to stay in Cuba."

The youth leader asked the crowd if people in the United States could walk down the streets of big cities without fear of rape, robbery, or murder; if parents could leave their children alone without fear that someone would give them drugs. Thousands replied, "Nowhere in the United States."

North American working people would be amazed to know the truth about Cuba, he said, where none of these disgraces exist.

"We are just telling it like it is," Robaina added. Commenting on the days of festivities in celebration of the UJC anniversary, he said, "They don't know what they've missed. They don't know what it's like to enjoy yourself with little money but lots of enthusiasm."

Robaina continued contrasting the conditions in the United States with those in Cuba. "In this underdeveloped country you can find better medical attention than in that great country of abundance," he said.

Cubans are extremely proud of the advances they have made in health care, which is completely free of charge. Infant mortality is lower in Cuba than in many U.S. cities.

Critics claim that Cuban youth are not as enthusiastic about the revolution as their parents. They try to create divisions between the older and younger generations, Robaina said. But they are making a mistake, he stated, "because to defend our homeland and the unity of the revolution, we don't ask anyone

for an ID card or proof of age. This movie is not off limits to minors. Everyone has an open ticket to defend their conquests. From the child-care center to the senior citizens' home, from cradle to grave, we are Cubans."

'Privilege of being communist'

"We have the beautiful privilege of having been the first of the organizations in our country to use the adjective communist," Robaina stated. Formerly the Association of Rebel Youth, the group changed its name at its first congress in 1962 on the suggestion of Cuban President Fidel Castro, who said communism was the "name of the future."

Answering those in the world who believe Cuba should adopt capitalist methods, Robaina stated, "We will continue to be, above all and in the face of everything, more communist than our own teachers, and if necessary more intransigent. Cuban youth will never get down on their knees to anyone!"

Robaina contrasted Cuba's limited resources with the wealth of more powerful nations and the millions spent on TV Martí. He pointed to the invitation by the Cuban children's group, the Pioneers, to young victims of the Chernobyl nuclear disaster in the Soviet Union to spend their vacations on the island. In addition, 139 Chernobyl victims are here receiving medical care.

"What a paradox between their abundance of resources and our limited means," Robaina said. "But what a great honor to share our only piece of bread with a brother. What a great honor to not be stingy and contemptible. What an immense satisfaction is felt knowing we don't exploit anyone, we don't rob anyone, and we don't plunder any country."

Robaina invited President Castro to say a few words. His speech centered mainly around whether Cuba was correct to resist imperialism and defend socialism. At a press conference earlier that day, a reporter had asked him if resistance would not lead to collective suicide.

"I answered," Castro said, "that we would prefer death to slavery."

The Cuban people and youth do not want a return to selfishness, vices, and squalor of capitalism, the president said.

But resistance is not the same as suicide, Castro stated. "Only those who are brave, only those who fight, only those who resist will triumph."

Denmark tour wins Curtis support

BY PETER THIERJUNG

DES MOINES, Iowa — An appeal for support of Mark Curtis' fight for justice was brought to unionists, political activists, and supporters of democratic rights across Denmark. Kate Kaku, a leader of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, toured the country March 21 through April 6.

In a telephone interview from Iceland, Kaku — who is also Curtis' wife — said she visited 17 Danish cities and spoke before some 3,000 people. Tens of thousands more heard her explain Curtis' frame-up conviction on rape and burglary charges by Des Moines city authorities in more than 20 interviews with TV and radio stations and newspapers. Kaku also explained Curtis' current campaign to reverse false charges of gambling and resulting penalties against him brought by prison authorities at the Iowa State Men's Reformatory in Anamosa, where he is incarcerated.

Kaku spoke at meetings of dockworkers in Esbjerg, where \$250 was donated, and Århus, where workers contributed \$1,000 to the defense effort. She also addressed more than 1,000 meat workers in two meetings. At a lunch-break gathering Kaku told some 600 slaughterhouse workers in Odense about Curtis' fight and the conditions faced by meat-packers in the United States. At a meeting in Hadsten 400 packinghouse workers

heard Kaku.

Workers were flabbergasted by the working conditions of meat-packers in the United States, Kaku said. At the Hadsten plant some 9,000 hogs are slaughtered each week, while at a similar U.S. plant more than 6,000 hogs are slaughtered each day. The conditions in Danish slaughterhouses are better, line speed is slower, and the pay is higher, Kaku reported.

"These better conditions are beginning to change as employers in Denmark look to do what the U.S. packinghouse bosses are doing," Kaku said. "Workers in Denmark are very interested in the struggles of working people in the United States, and in how Mark was part of fighting to change those conditions."

Kaku was also able to discuss Curtis' case with various political parties and organizations. She spoke to a meeting of 200 trade unionists who are also members of the Communist Party of Denmark and received a standing ovation. A collection made by the group netted \$250 for the defense campaign.

Some \$4,000 in all was contributed to the Des Moines-based Mark Curtis Defense Committee.

Kaku's visit to Denmark was part of a European tour that has taken her to Britain and now Iceland. She will also go to Sweden, Norway, and France.

Support activities will be key to raising \$60,000

Mark Curtis is a unionist and political activist from Des Moines, Iowa, who is serving a 25-year prison term in the state penitentiary in Anamosa on a frame-up conviction of rape and burglary.

The Mark Curtis Defense Committee is leading an international campaign to fight for justice for Curtis. For more information about the case or how you can help, write to the Mark Curtis

cards and collection of \$24.50," wrote a supporter from Atlanta. "These workers are part of a very low-wage industry... we were taught a real lesson by the willingness of these workers to donate money to the case." Castle, a Hollywood director, produced *The Frame-Up of Mark Curtis* to help publicize Curtis' fight for justice.

These activities are examples of how Curtis' supporters are stepping

pledges toward a \$20,000 fund that helped get a delegation of supporters to Geneva, Switzerland, to bring Curtis' case before the United Nations Human Rights Commission.

Contributions should be sent to the Mark Curtis Defense Committee. Tax-deductible contributions should be made out to the Political Rights Defense Fund, Inc.

"I have been following the continued victimization of Mark Curtis while he has been at Anamosa," wrote Johnny Flounnory in a letter to Anamosa prison warden John Thalacker. "Most recently, Mark has been charged with betting on the Super Bowl, found guilty based upon highly questionable evidence, and is suffering the consequences."

"To anyone familiar with Mark's situation, it is clear that he is guilty only of standing up for his own rights and those of other prisoners. We know, for instance, that he has recently participated in a successful effort by many inmates to furnish the prison library with relevant political books and literature."

"As a trade unionist, I strongly object to Mark's treatment by prison authorities. Like other workers, prisoners must have access to information which concerns them, and be able to share such information

among themselves, if they are to achieve any real improvement in their lives. The harassment of Mark Curtis must stop."

Flounnory is the business representative of the United Food and Commercial Workers Union Local 442 in Atlanta and is one of hundreds of trade unionists, political activists, religious figures, and civil liberties supporters who are demanding the gambling charges and penalties against Curtis be dropped. Curtis is currently appealing to the Iowa Department of Corrections to get the frame-up reversed.

You can help by sending a message of protest to Paul Grossheim, Director, Department of Corrections, Capitol Annex, 523 E. 12th St., Des Moines, Iowa 50309 USA; and to John A. Thalacker, Warden, Iowa State Men's Reformatory, Anamosa, Iowa 52205 USA. Copies and replies from prison officials should be sent to the defense committee.

A little more than two years ago on March 4, Mark Curtis was arrested and beaten by Des Moines police, who shattered his cheek bone and cut his face. Curtis has a civil suit pending against the police for their assault.

It seems not much has changed in

two years. The March 26 *Des Moines Register* reported the unfriendly greeting a Polish visitor to the city received from police.

Lorraine Rokitnicki, who arrived in February to visit relatives, stopped outside a Sears store in a mall to smell an evergreen. She was waiting for her brother and sister-in-law, but then a Des Moines cop grabbed her from behind, shook her up, and forced her into a squad car.

"She thought he was after her for pulling a berry off the evergreen," the sister-in-law said. "When he turned on the ignition of the car, she thought she was going to be kidnapped and all she could think of was her children and husband in Poland. She didn't know how we would ever find her."

"Essentially it's all true," Des Moines Police Chief Robert Moulder told the *Register*. "She was mistaken for a shoplifter. The officer did approach her from behind, and she was detained."

"We have apologized for the mistake but apparently that's not enough," Moulder said. "I don't know what more you can do."

Sandra Nelson, a leader of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee in Des Moines, Iowa, contributed to this week's column.

DEFEND MARK CURTIS!

Defense Committee, Box 1048, Des Moines, Iowa 50311; telephone (515) 246-1695.

If you have news or reports on activities in support of Mark Curtis from your city or country, please send them to the *Militant*.

"The enclosed checks are from a meeting in San Diego organized by supporters there. We brought materials from Los Angeles, 14 attended, and more than \$700 was contributed" said a note to the Mark Curtis Defense Committee with checks attached.

"We showed the video by Nick Castle to members of an Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union local last night in Louisville, Georgia. Enclosed are the endorser

up their fund-raising efforts. In several areas supporters have also organized phone calling of defense committee endorsers, combining them with getting protests directed at Iowa prison officials to demand that the frame-up gambling charges against Curtis be dropped. In January Curtis was falsely charged by prison authorities with gambling on the Super Bowl football game. The penalties imposed on Curtis will affect his fight for parole, if they are not reversed.

As of April 9, \$10,434 has been contributed toward the goal of \$60,000 needed to finance the legal and organizational work of the defense committee. The defense committee has also projected rapidly collecting the \$5,000 in outstanding

Political activist Mark Curtis appeals for new trial

Continued from front page

argued his case before a three-judge panel of the Iowa Court of Appeals March 7. Chief Appellate Judge Leo Oxberger presided at the hearing. Also sitting were judges Dick Schlegel and Rosemary Sackett.

Trial judge's rulings

Curtis' appeal brief, filed in June 1989, states that a series of rulings by the trial judge violated Curtis' constitutional rights and prevented him from getting a fair trial. The rulings included withholding crucial evidence from the jury, especially regarding the testimony of the police. The prosecution's case hinged on the word of Joseph Gonzalez, the arresting officer, who testified that he caught Curtis with his pants down at the scene of the alleged rape.

Other than Gonzalez' testimony, the prosecution was unable to present evidence pinning Curtis to the alleged crime. No seminal fluid or pubic hairs belonging to Curtis were found on the alleged victim. She testified that her clothes were covered with dog hairs from having been forced to the floor of her porch. None were found on Curtis' clothes. Her description of her attacker did not match Curtis' features. At the time she insisted the attack took place, Curtis was in a bar with dozens of coworkers from the Swift packing-house.

"The credibility of arresting officers was an important component of Mr. Curtis' trial based upon his defense that he was the victim of false arrest and frame-up," Curtis' brief states.

Trial judge Harry Perkins had refused to allow Curtis' lawyer to question Gonzalez about the fact that he had been suspended from the police force earlier for brutality and lying in a previous arrest.



Mark Curtis testifies during September 1988 trial. On March 7 Iowa Court of Appeals heard Curtis' motion to overturn his conviction, which was a "powerful indictment of an unfair trial," said defense committee leader John Studer at April 12 news conference. "It's crucial to mobilize public opinion now," said Black rights activist Edna Griffin.

Gonzalez' suspension from the police force for lying in the previous arrest "was particularly relevant," and the exclusion of this fact from the trial constitutes grounds for the appeals court to order a new trial, Curtis' attorneys argued.

Curtis' appeal brief cites a precedent-setting 1985 case in the Iowa Court of Appeals that states "in instances where the witness' credibility is so important and seriously challenged, the jury should know all facts which may reflect on that credibility."

State's position

Legal precedents cited in Curtis' appeal to support this claim "really didn't apply in this case," Iowa Assistant Attorney General Roxann Ryan told the *Militant*. She argued before the appeals court against Curtis' request for a new trial and submitted the state's legal brief, which contended that no questions of rights violations were at stake. The state's brief claims that the "evidence presented by the prosecution supports the guilty verdict." The state also asserted that Curtis had failed to prove "institutional bias or a frame-up."

"It was the prosecution, however, that moved the judge bar Curtis from submitting evidence of institutional bias and a frame-up at his 1988 trial," said Studer. "This included barring information on Curtis' beating by Des

Moines police officers; excluding evidence of surveillance of Curtis as a leader of the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador and of his political party, the Socialist Workers Party; and the failure of county prosecutors to press criminal charges against the father of the alleged victim when, after telling two cops he was going to "kick some ass," he attempted to attack Curtis at the Pathfinder Bookstore and then did \$2,000 worth of damage there.

Curtis' appeal also raised the following issues as a basis for a new trial:

- The judge failed to inform the jury that the testimony of Brian Willey, a coworker of Curtis', was grounds for acquittal. Willey gave undisputed testimony that Curtis was with him and others at Los Compadres, a local bar when the alleged victim claimed she was attacked.

- The judge ignored a series of irregularities involving the jury, including the removal of a juror prior to deliberations solely because he was familiar with places mentioned during the trial; evidence that the jury's verdict was not unanimous; and information that a juror had been seen with the family of the alleged victim during a break in the trial.

- Finally, the appeal argues that even with all the trial irregularities and prejudicial rul-

ings against Curtis, the evidence was insufficient for conviction.

Curtis' appeal contends that "the Sixth and Fourteenth Amendments to the Federal Constitution require the admission of relevant evidence," and these were violated by the judge's decision.

Curtis can appeal his case to the Iowa Supreme Court and then to U.S. federal courts should his request for a new trial be turned down. Should the court rule in Curtis' favor, the state can also appeal to higher courts to attempt to block a new trial. This is an unusual step for the state to take, said Ryan, but it can be done.

"We will step up our efforts to take Mark's fight to the world," Studer said. "We will defend his rights to be politically active in prison. We will publicize the justice of his struggle for freedom. We can't be sure how long this fight will take. But Mark will walk out of that prison an unbroken and confident political activist. And the human rights of all will be strengthened by our efforts."

A popular local radio station prominently reported the news that Curtis' appeal had been heard and publicized the defense committee's news conference.

Pittston miners set April 21-22 festivities

"Labor stood with us and the United Mine Workers of America intends to do all it can to stand with our brothers and sisters who need support," reads the March 16 issue of the *Camo-Call*, the UMW newsletter published during the 1989-90 strike against Pittston Coal Group. UMW miners and friends have announced two days of festivities for April 21-22 in southwestern Virginia. Strikers, unionists, and other supporters are invited to attend.

The event will be held at the Wise County Fairgrounds in Wise, Virginia. Camp Solidarity, where tens of thousands of Pittston strike supporters stayed during the 11-month battle, will be open on a first come-first serve basis. The weekend will include speakers, music, food, games, and fun. For more information contact Peggy Johnson or Saundie Smith at (703) 762-5537.

In our next issue...

Eastern Europe series to resume next week

The "Crisis in Eastern Europe" series will resume in next week's *Militant* with the second part. Peter Thierjung, who is writing the series, is on special assignment in Des Moines, Iowa, reporting on developments in the Mark Curtis defense campaign. The conquests of the October 1917 Russian revolution will be the focus of Part II.

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Militant/Charles Ostrofsky

Carlos Tablada (left) autographs books at Washington Peace Center during his visit to capital

Cuban economist on U.S. tour talks about Guevara and rectification process today

BY JANICE LYNN

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Cuban economist Carlos Tablada spoke to 150 people at the Washington Peace Center here April 6. The meeting was the culmination of Tablada's visit to the U.S. capital and the second stop of his 12-city U.S. tour.

Tablada is the author of *Che Guevara: Economics and Politics in the Transition to Socialism*, published in English by Pathfinder.

At the meeting the Cuban author was welcomed to Washington, D.C., by City Councilwoman Hilda Mason; Lisa Fithian, director of the Washington Peace Center; Zeph Makgetla, African National Congress Mission to the United States; Joan Drake, of the international board of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom; Jerry Oliveira, political director of the Virginia Machinists Union; and Sam Manuel, Pathfinder Bookstore.

Greetings were read from Angela Sanbrano, executive director of the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador. The Washington, D.C., New Song Committee performed songs dedicated to the Cuban people.

Tablada noted the importance of meetings like this for learning the truth about what is happening in Cuba.

Central to Cuba today, Tablada said, is the rectification process, in which Ernesto Che Guevara's contributions to the building of socialism are very relevant.

'A new human solidarity'

"Che believed that the construction of socialism did not only mean increasing production, investment, and consumer goods," Tablada noted, "but the creation of new human beings, a new society, and a new human solidarity."

In the last two years, by appealing to the consciousness and solidarity of the Cuban people, explained Tablada, 107 child-care centers were completed using voluntary labor and special construction brigades. Before the rectification process was initiated, he said, it had taken nine years to complete only 12 day-care centers.

Tablada's tour in Washington, D.C., also included a reception at the Cuban Interests Section attended by 70 people and a talk at the Institute for Policy Studies. Among those attending the latter meeting were IPS director Saul Landau, Isabel Letelier, and Alicia Torres, a lobbyist for the Cuban-American Committee, which favors changes in U.S. policy to make it easier for Cubans living here to visit Cuba.

The Cuban economist presented a lecture at American University before 70 students and faculty. He conducted a briefing on Capitol Hill for the congressional staff of five members of the U.S. House of Representatives. The briefing was organized by Carlotta Scott, executive assistant to U.S. Congressman Ronald Dellums.

In addition, Tablada presented a guest lecture at the School for Advanced International Studies at Johns Hopkins University on the invitation of Wayne Smith, former head of the U.S. government Interests Section in Cuba. He also gave several media interviews.

Range of questions

The Cuban economist was asked many questions, including: How are AIDS patients treated in Cuba? Can the Cuban revolution survive given events in Eastern Europe? Are there elections and opposition parties in

Cuba? and, What do the Cuban people think of TV Martí?

During the course of the tour, 55 copies of Tablada's book were sold and 150 people signed an appeal to the U.S. State Department for the unrestricted right to travel to and from Cuba and for lifting the U.S. government's blockade against Cuba.

After touring the Washington, D.C., area, Tablada headed to the West Coast. His first stop was Los Angeles, where he will be

through April 14. On April 7 more than 225 people attended a citywide meeting at the United Methodist Church there.

Other speaking engagements in Los Angeles include the University of California at Riverside, California State at Los Angeles, and the University of Southern California. Tablada is scheduled for interviews with two Spanish-language radio shows and the main Spanish-language daily, *La Opinión*. An informal gathering at the home of Hollywood

director Nick Castle will be held for Tablada.

City Councilman Robert Farrell issued a proclamation to welcome the Cuban economist to the city.

Other areas Tablada will visit include: Price (April 16) and Salt Lake City (April 17), Utah; San Francisco-Oakland Bay Area (April 18-22); central North Carolina (April 24); Chicago (April 26); Boston (April 27-May 1); western Massachusetts (May 2); and New York (May 6-13).

Guevara's perspective for organizing labor in the transition to socialism

Che Guevara: Economics and Politics in the Transition to Socialism, by Carlos Tablada. New York: Pathfinder, 1989. 286 pp. \$14.95 (until May 15).

BY DOUG JENNESS

Before 1959 the principal industrial, commercial, and agricultural enterprises in Cuba were privately owned by capitalists, the most dominant ones from the United States.

Economic decisions in Cuba at that time were made according to what was profitable to big business and banking interests, and a huge part of the wealth produced by Cuba's working people was funnelled into U.S. bank accounts.

Education, health care, housing, environmental protection, and economic development in Cuba were of no concern to these exploiters of human labor, and few resources were allocated to advancing them. Capitalism in Cuba meant that a handful got wealthier, while the great majority lived in poverty.

IN REVIEW

This all ended in the two years after the workers and peasants overthrew Fulgencio Batista on Jan. 1, 1959. Working people destroyed the old state bureaucracy, including the police force and army, and forged their own instruments of power. Through a series of mass mobilizations they expropriated nearly all capitalist holdings, both foreign and Cuban, in the period August-October 1960.

By implementing two agrarian reform laws (1959 and 1963) capitalist agriculture was eliminated and the rights of independent working farmers and their families were guaranteed. The Urban Reform Law adopted in October 1960 eliminated capitalist ownership of real estate, thus ending profit making from rents, mortgages, and speculation.

Government control over foreign trade and currency was established.

On April 16, 1961, at a rally to protest a bombing attack on a Havana airport on the eve of the U.S.-backed invasion at Playa Girón, Cuban Prime Minister Fidel Castro declared for the first time that the Cuban revolution was a "socialist revolution."

Organizing transition to socialism

With the end of capitalist political rule and economic domination, the big question was how could working people use their newly won political power and nationalized property relations in basic industry, transportation, and commerce to organize a transition to socialism.

Ernesto Che Guevara, one of the prominent leaders of the revolutionary struggle against Batista, was in the center of figuring out how to lead the transition to socialism. In October 1959 he was designated head of the Industry Department of the National Institute of Agrarian Reform and the following month he became head of the state-owned National Bank.

In February 1961, following the wave of nationalizations in Cuba, Guevara became head of the new Ministry of Industry set up to oversee the state-owned enterprises.

Carlos Tablada, in *Che Guevara: Econom-*

ics and Politics in the Transition to Socialism does an excellent job of summarizing what Guevara learned about politically organizing the working class to take the first steps toward socialism. He refers to writings that are currently available in English in *Che Guevara and the Cuban Revolution: Writings and Speeches of Ernesto Che Guevara*, published by Pathfinder in 1987, as well as to many works that are neither readily available in Spanish nor English.

Tablada points out that Guevara had studied closely the writings of Karl Marx and

Continued on Page 13

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Recalled flight attendants press Lorenzo on safety

Some 8,500 International Association of Machinists members struck Eastern Airlines March 4, 1989, in an effort to block the company's drive to break the union and impose massive concessions on workers.

As of the *Militant's* closing news date, Wednesday, April 11, the

from former striking flight attendants who have been called back to work, but still support the Machinists' fight. Some wear "No Lorenzo" buttons inside their uniform jackets and flash them to strikers as they walk inside.

One afternoon, while several Machinists from Northwest Airlines

eral hundred flight attendants who had been on strike have been recalled.

Some of those recalled, the flight attendant said, are doing their best to keep up the pressure on Lorenzo, including complaining about rampant safety violations, which Eastern denies.

At one meeting, the TWU member explained, managers asked the flight attendants if they really thought Eastern would ask them to fly on an unsafe aircraft. "Yes," the flight attendants responded unanimously.

"Down with Lorenzo, up with the union" was one of the most popular chants at the Eastern strikers' expanded line at Intercontinental Airport in Houston April 1.

A majority of the 30 people there were striking Greyhound workers who came in their uniforms to show their support for the Machinists fight. One Greyhound striker had been arrested earlier that morning while on picket duty at the bus station. A scab fingered him to cops, charging that he was carrying a gun.

The cops immediately grabbed him and frisked him, but no gun was found. Eastern strikers urged everyone to attend the Greyhound workers' next rally.

Joyce Miller, vice-president of the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union, has launched a fund-raising campaign to back the Eastern strikers, the March 20 Eastern strike bulletin reported.

In a memorandum to all ACTWU staff, vice-presidents, and managers, Miller said, "Many strike pantry operations need help in Miami, Atlanta, New York, and other cities. Funds are needed to purchase food and baby supplies; Eastern strikers need to know that their trade union brothers and sisters support them in their struggle. To help achieve this, the ACTWU Social Services Department will be collecting funds for the strike pantries. . . . Your contributions will be most appreciated by the striking Machinists and their families."

In the April 6 column we reported

on some of the recent support the Eastern strike has won in New Zealand, including a statement of solidarity from the Canterbury District Council of the New Zealand Council of Trade Unions.

Brigid Rotherham from New Zealand wrote recently to clarify that the Canterbury District Council represents the labor movement in Christchurch, that country's second-largest city. At their recent meeting, 50 council delegates met and approved the resolution of support, marking the first anniversary of the strike at Eastern on March 4.

In addition, Canterbury secretary John McKenzie wrote to the New Zealand Council of Trade Unions, the main labor federation in the country, to encourage them to support the strike. McKenzie also wrote to Continental Airlines regional manager in Auckland to inform him of the CTU's support for the Machinists. Continental is one of the major international carriers that flies to New Zealand.

Ellen Berman from Atlanta and Mary Selvas from Houston contributed to this column.



SUPPORT EASTERN STRIKERS!

strike was in its 404th day.

The Eastern workers' fight has won broad support from working people in the United States, Puerto Rico and the Caribbean, Canada, Bermuda, Sweden, New Zealand, France, and elsewhere in the world. Readers — especially Eastern strikers — are encouraged to send news of strike solidarity activities to this column.

At Atlanta's Hartsfield International Airport, Eastern strikers have recently received encouragement

were walking through the airport in their "Don't fly Eastern or Continental" T-shirts, a flight attendant said she would rather be wearing a strike T-shirt than her Eastern uniform.

The recalled flight attendants are members of the Transport Workers Union. When the IAM walked out at Eastern in March 1989, the TWU and Air Line Pilots Association honored the IAM's picket lines. Last November, ALPA and TWU officials ended the sympathy strikes, a move that angered many flight attendants and pilots. Since then, sev-

New York strikers plan solidarity rally on May 3

Continued from front page

performers and others in the entertainment business. Continental Airlines, Texas Air's other carrier, was billed as the event's official airline.

The appearance of Lorenzo's name was not the only one to stir anger among union members in New York. *Daily News* publisher James Hoge, who is leading the paper's anti-union drive, was also listed as an executive committee member.

Unionists in the entertainment industry were quick to come to the aid of the Eastern strikers. A few days after the ad appeared, Alfred Di Tolla, president of the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees and Moving Picture Machine Operators, wrote a letter to Vincent Vitelli, secretary and general manager of the Actors' Fund.

"It is with anger and sorrow that I write to you to protest your thoughtless use of Frank Lorenzo in this event," Di Tolla wrote. "Surely you are aware that he is one of the labor movement's notable enemies, having caused widespread distress to so many trade unions and indeed, the labor movement in general."

"Unless and until Frank Lorenzo's participation in the 'Night of 100 Stars' is rescinded and a public apology is given with

equal publicity to that given to Mr. Lorenzo's participation, I have directed all IATSE locals not to participate in the event. I am also notifying the AFL-CIO of my intentions and I am certain it, like I, will consider Mr. Lorenzo's participation an affront to the labor movement."

The Screen Actors Guild wrote a similar letter protesting Lorenzo's participation. On April 6 *New York Newsday* announced that James Hoge had been dropped from the benefit's executive committee. A few days later, an Actors Guild representative confirmed that Lorenzo had also been dropped.

Eastern strikers, and other unionists plan to leaflet the May 5 gala, however, to protest the continued use of Continental as the event's airline — something that couldn't be changed, the Actors' Fund decided.

Lorenzo's prospects grow dimmer

Meanwhile, Eastern Airlines' unsecured creditors and preferred shareholders are speeding up moves aimed at salvaging what they can from Eastern by pressing for control of the airline to be taken out of Lorenzo's hands.

On April 10 the unsecured creditors asked the bankruptcy court overseeing Eastern's affairs to appoint a trustee to run the airline,

following their rejection last week of Eastern's latest "reorganization" plan. The unsecured creditors, who are owed nearly \$1 billion by Eastern, include jet engine manufacturer General Electric, plane manufacturers Boeing and Airbus Industrie, bondholders, Machinists union, Air Line Pilots Association, and the Transport Workers Union, representing flight attendants.

Lorenzo's latest reorganization plan for Eastern — his fifth since the airline filed for bankruptcy on March 9, 1989 — was to pay the creditors 25 cents on the dollar for what they are owed. IAM, TWU, and ALPA officials have long pressed for the bankruptcy court to appoint a trustee to take over running the strike-bound airline. The airline's corporate creditors, however, have stuck with Lorenzo until recently, hoping he could make his plans for a smaller, nonunion airline work.

"Eastern's management has shown little ability to generate the required confidence of airline travelers and the business community at large," the creditors' motion for a trustee said. "It is also clear that, in light of Eastern's record-breaking losses, its inability to generate accurate forecasts and its constant renegotiations of agreed-upon plans, creditors

have justifiably lost all confidence in management as well."

The creditors are also opposing — unless a trustee is named — Eastern's request for an additional \$80 million from the escrow fund in which proceeds from the sale of the airline's assets are held. Eastern is down to \$40 million in cash and will run out of money soon without an additional infusion of cash.

On April 9 Eastern's preferred shareholders also gave Lorenzo a vote of no-confidence by filing their own reorganization plan for the company, which calls for the airline to be separated from Texas Air. Organized as an independent company under this plan, Eastern would be owned 50 percent by unsecured creditors, 45 percent by preferred shareholders, and 5 percent by the new, incoming management.

On April 4 Eastern asked the bankruptcy court for permission to break its contract with the Air Line Pilots Association, hoping in this way to save \$50 million a year. Although ALPA officials have been more than willing to take steep concessions, including a 25 percent cut in pay and a 70 percent cut in pensions, Lorenzo wants more.

United board okays buyout

BY PATTI HIYAMA

NEW YORK — The board of directors of UAL Corporation, the parent company of United Airlines, decided April 6 to approve a \$4.4 billion buyout plan by company employees.

If the buyout goes through, the International Association of Machinists (IAM), Association of Flight Attendants (AFA), and Air Line Pilots Association (ALPA) will pay UAL stockholders \$201 a share for the second-largest U.S. air carrier. The deal is being touted by the big-business media as creating the world's largest "employee-owned" company. Members of the IAM would get 36 percent of the stock; pilots, 38 percent; flight attendants, 12 percent; and noncontract employees 14 percent.

To help fund the buyout, the 6,600 pilots, 13,200 flight attendants, 25,600 Machinists, and 18,300 nonunion workers at United are being pressed for concessions totaling \$2 billion over the next five years. As the April 8 *New York Times* put it, "The UAL Corporation has found a way to win concessions from its unions: Sell them the company."

Proposed concessions from IAM members include a five-year contract with a six-year no-strike clause and a 3.7 percent wage decrease in the first year for A-scale (top wage) employees, which will "snap back" to current rates in the remaining four years, resulting in no wage increase over the life of the contract. Union officials concede that more conces-

sions could be required if the company does not do well.

Many Machinists hope the deal will fall through, as happened with the similar ALPA-management plan that collapsed last October in the face of opposition by Machinists to the deep concessions demanded to finance the buyout.

The UAL board has given ALPA, the IAM, and AFA four months to secure financing for the current deal — something which is far from certain. The buyout would increase United's debt by 500 percent, from \$800 million to more than \$5 billion, and would add up to \$500 million in extra annual interest costs. United's net income last year totaled only \$325 million and is projected to decline to \$240 million in 1990. This does not leave much room for error, even with the considerable concessions granted by the unions.

IAM officials are pushing the proposed buyout and concession contract. It is the only way to save the jobs of UAL employees and control the sale of the airline's planes, routes, and other assets, they argue.

IAM members expect to vote on the proposed contract in the next few weeks. The national executive board of ALPA has already approved the contract. AFA members will be voting by mail.

Patti Iiyama, a member of IAM Local 1322, is a cleaner for United Airlines at Kennedy International Airport in New York.

Greyhound sues union



Militant/Steve Marshall

Steelworkers marched to back Greyhound strikers in Pittsburgh on March 14. On April 9 Greyhound filed a \$30 million lawsuit against the Amalgamated Transit Union, charging that the ATU is responsible for shootings of scab-driven buses. The bus company has fired 60 strikers for alleged acts of violence, vandalism. The ATU represents 9,000 Greyhound workers on strike since March 2.

Labor-law dispute, strikes break out in Nicaragua during transition to new regime

FSLN leaders press deputies not to pass law favoring labor

BY LARRY SEIGLE
AND SETH GALINSKY

MANAGUA, Nicaragua — As the leadership of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) concentrates on collaborating with the government-elect of Violeta Chamorro to ensure a "stable" transfer of government authority, it is also working hard to win as many of its own members and supporters as possible to fully backing these efforts.

Some of the pressures Sandinista Front officials are facing have been reflected in a sharp dispute in the legislature over proposed amendments to the country's labor law. In an unusual display of discord in the traditionally tightly disciplined FSLN caucus in the National Assembly, some of its members have publicly disagreed over the introduction of changes in 61 articles of the law.

"We must limit ourselves to the most urgent and necessary questions" and discuss only two or three of the articles, said Rafael Solís, a leader of the FSLN in the assembly. The rest should be left to the incoming deputies, he said.

The new body, which will be dominated by the pro-Washington bloc that won the February elections, is to be sworn in when Chamorro takes office April 25.

It would be a mistake to "destabilize" the Chamorro government, Solís argued. Any proposed changes in the labor code "should be brought into harmony with the high-level negotiations that are taking place" with Chamorro's representatives, he added. Closed-door discussions between the Sandinista Front leadership and the Chamorro forces have been going on since shortly after the election defeat of the FSLN.

Other members of the Sandinista Front parliamentary group disagree, however, and have pushed for an extensive rewriting of the labor code.

Deputy Danilo Aguirre said the assembly must "leave the working class with enough weapons to face the new situation." To do otherwise, he argued, would be "a betrayal of the working class." Aguirre is assistant editor of *El Nuevo Diario*, a pro-FSLN daily.

Series of major bills

The amendments to the labor code are one of a series of major bills the legislature has taken up in the past several weeks, most of which have been enacted without serious controversy. These include the granting of sweeping immunity for crimes committed since 1979 for which charges have not yet been filed, and a law giving occupants title to government-owned dwellings.

By far the most important measure adopted was one allowing the unrestricted sale and mortgaging of land distributed to peasants under the agrarian reform.

Previously, peasants had titles guaranteeing them the right to work the land as long as they chose and to bequeath it to their heirs. To protect their right to the land, it could not be mortgaged or sold.

The new law, which will lead to bank foreclosures and increased landlessness of the poorest peasants, was adopted by the FSLN-dominated assembly with little disagreement and not much attention from the news media.

In contrast to the reaction to most of these bills, the proposed rewriting of the labor code has sparked heated exchanges in the assembly. Final action was put off several times, and as of April 6 the dispute had still not been resolved.

Pathfinder carries a broad range of books on revolutionary and socialist history and theory. It publishes a wide selection of titles on the Black, women's, labor Latin American, and international struggles. The current catalog is available upon request from your local Pathfinder bookstore or write: Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014.

The existing labor law was adopted in 1945, at a time when the Moscow-line Communist Party, called the Nicaraguan Socialist Party, was in a wartime political alliance with the dictator Anastasio Somoza. Since the revolution led by the FSLN triumphed in 1979, there have been periodic calls by the Sandinista Workers Federation (CST) for a new labor code, but no action was taken by the legislature.

In recent weeks, however, proposals for substantial revisions in the law have gained momentum as a result of several strikes that have broken out in Managua and the impending transfer of government. Many workers feel that in the weeks remaining to it, the FSLN majority in the assembly should use its power to enact laws protecting workers' rights.

Nathan Sevilla, a Sandinista Front deputy who backs the proposal for a broad reform, argued that the new regime "wants to implement a capitalist model and return to the past." Stronger legal protection of union rights is needed now, he said.

Transition negotiations

In an interview, José María Ortiz, also a Sandinista Front deputy, said he rejects the position put forward by the FSLN leadership in the assembly that major changes in the labor code should be referred to the transition negotiators.

"The transition talks should deal with questions of defense, of security, and the handing over of ministries," Ortiz said. "We do not see any reason to link the labor law reform with the transition conversations or the installation of the new government."

Members of the Sandinista Front caucus who argued for extensive rewriting of the labor code emphasize that the difference of opinion within their caucus is on a secondary issue. The disagreement is not "substantial," FSLN deputy Sevilla stressed.

Nonetheless, as the debate dragged on in the assembly, the FSLN leadership sought to discredit proponents of the amendments by linking their position to proposals put forward by sectarian opponents of the FSLN.

Some deputies resented this. Hazel Lau, a Sandinista Front representative from the North Atlantic Coast, complained during one debate, "Every time anyone has a disagreement, they are labeled as radicals or supporters of the MAP." The MAP-ML (People's Action Movement-Marxist Leninist) was founded in 1972 by student radicals who opposed the FSLN.

Reject 'confrontationist' positions

As the assembly repeatedly deferred decision on the labor code, the discussion spilled over into how to respond to an appeal from workers on strike at the Corona cooking-oil factory.

The strikers urged the deputies to adopt a resolution declaring their strike legal, reform the labor law, and enact a higher minimum wage. Their appeal was read by a deputy of the MAP-ML.

FSLN leader Carlos Núñez took the floor to respond. Nicaragua has only two options, he said. "The first would be to go on a war footing, paralyze the factories and the agricultural centers, and take over the assembly."

But that "would be suicide, that would be the road of violence, and would end any possibility of peace," he continued.

The other choice "is the option of peace." Bosses and workers alike should be urged to follow this alternative, he argued.

"We must persuade those who have radical confrontationist positions that this country can only find a way out of the economic and social crisis with the participation of all social forces and all political parties."

"It is necessary to neutralize and combat all those Nicaraguan citizens, whether they are bosses or workers, who try to sabotage and denigrate the efforts that are being made to finalize and bring about real peace in Nicaragua," Núñez said.



Militant/Susan Apstein

Striking employees at a Managua cooking-oil plant welcome a convoy of trucks driven by workers in solidarity with the strike. Workers at Pepsi, Coca-Cola, and La Victoria bottling plants and sugar mill workers from around the country helped with material aid to the strikers.

Food and plastics workers test strength in two Managua strikes

BY SUSAN APSTEIN

MANAGUA, Nicaragua — Two strikes here are increasingly being looked to as a test of the relationship of forces between the unions and bosses.

Workers shut down the Polymer plastics and Corona cooking-oil factories March 27 after the employers refused to discuss union demands. Both plants are owned by the big U.S.-based corporation United Brands (formerly United Fruit Co.).

"The company pushed us. They want to gauge how much resolve we have to defend our rights," said union leader Gustavo Centeno from Polymer.

Workers at the plastics plant went out when the company refused to negotiate a wage increase. "They decreed a 15 percent raise. It was a joke, a provocation," Centeno said. "They wouldn't even meet with us." The factory employs 85 people.

In both strikes the unions are demanding a 100 percent wage hike, which is closer to the rate of inflation. The 250 workers at Corona are also pressing the company to rehire a union leader dismissed several months ago.

As soon as the strikes began, management at both plants threatened to fire union leaders.

Series of walkouts

The Polymer and Corona strikes are part of a series of walkouts that began in the second half of March. In addition to stoppages at several factories, government employees of the Institute of Culture — at libraries, museums, and other institutions — went out. Most of the strikes were settled quickly, with an agreement to raise wages.

At Polymer and Corona, however, management has refused to negotiate until workers end the stoppages.

Polymer workers say the company tightened up plant rules and began harassing union members right after the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) was defeated in the February elections by a pro-U.S. opposition coalition backed by Washington. Most of the workers, they say, are known as FSLN supporters.

The plastics company made no attempt to try to prevent the walkout, according to workers. Plant director Raúl Solórzano took off for Costa Rica a few days before the strike, calling the workers "a bunch of seditious bums."

Solórzano is a member of one of seven committees that form president-elect Violeta Chamorro's "transition team," charged with supervising the changeover to the new government. According to union leader Gustavo Centeno, Solórzano's attitude "gives you an

idea of what life will be like under the new government."

Workers from other workplaces, mostly in Managua, have begun to express their solidarity with the two strikes. A delegation of sugar mill workers representing seven mills throughout the country packed into trucks and drove into Managua to the cooking-oil plant to bring money and statements of support.

Groups of workers from dozens of Managua factories have also delivered sacks of rice and beans, cases of Pepsi, and other donations to the 24-hour picket line at the Polymer plant. Money collected at the plants is presented to the strikers.

A week after the two walkouts began, Lucio Jiménez, president of the Sandinista Workers Federation (CST), announced the federation's support. The union at Polymer is a CST affiliate; at Corona, workers are organized in an independent union.

If the unions at Corona and Polymer "lose this battle we all lose," Jiménez said. He reported that the CST will help organize a solidarity fund.

Unions press Ministry of Labor

The unions at Polymer and Corona are pressing the Ministry of Labor to declare their strikes legal, because this would afford them some protection against firings. Under Nicaraguan labor law, the Ministry of Labor regulates strikes and is supposed to aid in negotiations.

A week after the Polymer strike began, union leaders met with officials of the labor ministry. A CST representative participated as well.

In the session, ministry officials tried to convince Gustavo Centeno and the other Polymer union leaders to end the strike. In exchange, the officials said, the company would be willing to withdraw its threats to fire union leaders and its imposition of a 45-day work suspension on 20 strike activists.

Once the strike was over, the company would negotiate on wages, the ministry officials promised, suggesting that a 30 percent wage hike would be possible.

The deal was worth accepting, one of the government officials explained to the unionists, because the company "wants your heads."

Moreover, the strike could not be declared legal, the officials insisted, because "the transition to the new government has already begun." The ministry no longer "really has the authority to declare the strike legal."

Centeno was not moved by these arguments. **Continued on page 13**

Union miners fight for rights in apartheid S. Africa

BY RICH PALSER

WELKOM, South Africa — Tens of thousands of mine workers are taking action against racism and aspects of apartheid in the mining industry here. Defying rules that segregate facilities and staging strikes, protest rallies, and sit-downs, members of the non-racial National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) are demanding equal rights with white miners.

One such action took place at the President Brand gold mine here.

White miners who work at the Anglo-American-owned mine live with their families in the whites-only suburbs of Welkom.

Black workers, NUM organizer Franz Berlini explained, are housed in barrack-like compounds called hostels. "In the hostels you will find, on average, 10 people to a room. In some mines you will get 30 to a room," he said. "Women are not allowed in the hostels. And even if a mine worker gets a visit from his wife, they have to stand outside the hostel and then go somewhere else."

Located within walking distance of each of the five shafts at the President Brand mine is a hostel.

'Police always around'

At the gates of a hostel with 4,000 workers and surrounded by a 15-foot wall, armed company security police search miners going in and out. Visible inside the grounds is an armored "hippo" personnel carrier. "The security police are always around," one worker explained. "They search us whenever we go in and out of the hostel."

After work March 21, miners began to gather outside the hostel, singing freedom songs and dancing back and forth across the road. The rally was organized because "we are not allowed to sing in the hostel, not allowed to dance," one of them said. "The company has such a policy to stop us singing freedom songs. They see that as a political meeting — and that is not allowed."

Mine workers here recently joined with

union branches at four other mines defying company rules by bringing their wives into the male-only compounds. "While we are fighting the whole hostel system, we demanded that there must be some kind of arrangement," Berlini recounted. "People should be in a position to accommodate their wife. Since the beginning of the month, people have marched with their women into the hostel. They go to the dining room, and then come out again."

Cheap labor force

The foremost aim of the apartheid system is to provide vast amounts of cheap labor for mining and other industries.

Mining in South Africa is labor intensive. There are 850,000 miners employed by giants like Anglo-American. At the President Brand mine alone there are 20,000. Black miners account for 88 percent of the total mining work force.

Driving Blacks off the land and depriving them of livelihoods in farming, the apartheid regime has forced them into remote "homelands." These bantustans represent only 13 percent of the land area in the country.

The NUM calculates the average wage for African miners at 650 rand (US\$245) per month, where the average white miner's salary is R3,500 per month.

With poor and overcrowded land in the bantustans and little industrial development, Africans are forced to seek work as migrant laborers in the fields and mines of South Africa. "If a mine has vacancies they will send a list saying what skills and experience are needed to the TEBA [The Employment Bureau of South Africa, Ltd.]. These offices are in the bantustans," Berlini explained. "It is not easy for a Black worker to come from the Transkei to Welkom and just look for work. You have to queue at the TEBA office in the Transkei."

Berlini explained that the mine companies also recruit massively from the neighboring countries of Mozambique, Swaziland, Botswana, Lesotho, and Malawi. "We had to develop our own language to talk to each other in the mines," he said.

One-year individual contracts

Like these workers, Africans from the bantustans are recruited on one-year contracts, at the end of which they must return to their "homeland."

"You can work for up to 12 months, and then you have to return home," a miner from Lesotho explained. "Then you must wait several months to return to work. You can't just go and work in another industry."

In addition to denying Africans the right to own land to farm, the apartheid system bars them from rights held by workers in other capitalist countries. Once classified as a mine worker or farm worker, Blacks cannot easily seek employment in a manufacturing plant or other industries. Thus, they are not allowed to freely sell their labor power to any capitalist who is hiring workers. This helps maintain the superexploitation of African labor.

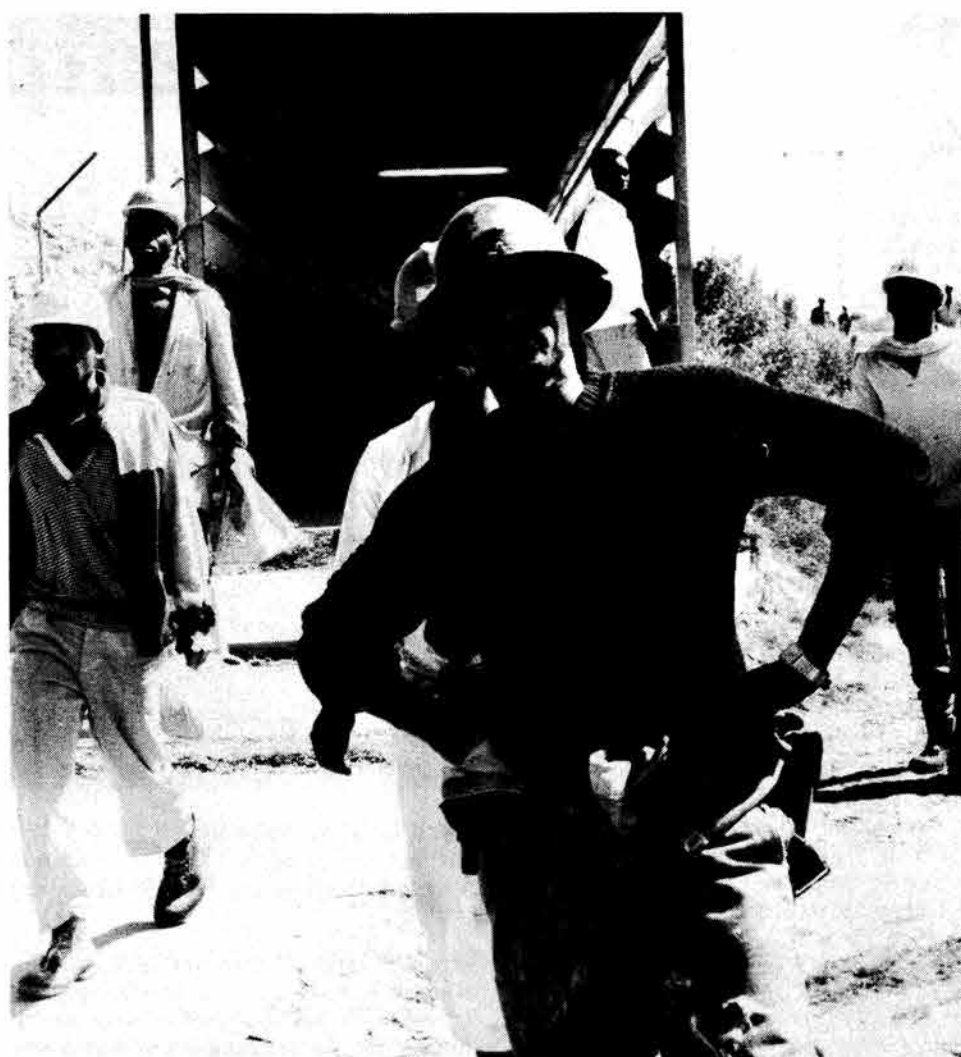
This system was dealt a blow when the apartheid regime was forced to scrap the hated pass laws in 1986. These laws required Blacks to carry a pass book detailing where they could work and live.

Many workers in the townships and bantustans can now go directly to an employer to seek work, especially in manufacturing industries.

Antiunion migrant labor system

But the migrant labor system is still extensively used by the mine owners. It strengthens their hand against effective union organization. For example, in 1982 — the year in which the NUM was founded, 30,000 miners who struck over low pay were fired and forcibly returned to the bantustans. Living in company-owned hostels and reliant on company-owned facilities, miners are watched over by private company police.

Near Libanon in the Transvaal, all mineral rights and surface rights surrounding the



Militant/Margrethe Siem
Miners at President Brand mine where 20,000 work near Welkom, South Africa. Mine union, which has grown to 79,000 in area, fights against apartheid on the job.

mines are owned by the mining companies. Between the neat rows of garden beds for white workers, African laborers tend manicured lawns and flower beds around the administration block and whites-only sports fields. Security police regularly patrol the area to ensure that there are no unwelcome visitors. The hostels are located at the back of the "town," behind a large fence.

Despite the pleasant outward appearance, racial segregation runs as deep as the mines themselves. "There are change houses where you wash and change clothes," Berlini said. "Blacks have their own change houses, normally with cold water. Whites have warm water, soap, everything. They don't buy anything. The Blacks have to buy everything for themselves."

"We defied that last February by having some comrades go in to use their facilities. There were also some senior messes and bars reserved for whites. At one mine they closed the bar because so many were defying and going to the bar."

Racist hoisting policy targeted

A recent target of union action has been the mine companies' practice of giving white workers priority when hoisting them in and out of the mine. Berlini explained that while white workers start going down into the mine an hour after Black workers, they are the first to be lifted out at the end of a shift. "At one level you may get around 2,000 miners waiting to be hoisted out," he said. "White miners, even if they are late getting to the hoisting station, will just go up and be hoisted out. Everyone else has to get in line. We demand that all workers, regardless of the color, must queue."

It can take an hour to be lifted from a lower level of the shaft. Black miners do not get paid overtime while waiting to be hoisted. The union has begun enforcing a nonracial hoisting policy. Some white miners responded by demanding that management ensure that they would not be forced to line up.

At Anglo's Western Holdings mine near here, management locked out workers claiming that "whites were threatened with violence." Conservative Party members in the whites-only parliament have claimed that whites were assaulted at the President Brand, President Steyn, and Harmony mines.

"At one mine whites went underground with guns saying they wanted to defend themselves," Berlini said.

The management at Anglo-American claims that their hoisting policy is not racist, but based on seniority. Anglo-American spokesman Adrian du Plessis claimed that "the unconstitutional changing of hoisting schedules in the mines" was one of the reasons for "racial conflict." The unilateral changes being made by Black miners were "resulting in racial discrimination," he said. "The protest action that

follows aggravates work relations and promotes violence," he said.

These actions by NUM members form part of the union campaign for "justice, democracy, and peace," Berlini said. "There is no justice in the mines. People are fired and ill-treated simply because they are union members. . . . There is no democracy because there is no freedom of movement, no freedom of assembly. . . . There is no peace because after the 1987 strike the owners reinforced the security police, who are assaulting people on a daily basis. The whole hostel system means there is no peace at all."

The NUM has grown in the last eight years through militant campaigns like these. "There are now 79,000 members in the Orange Free State, out of a possible membership of 155,000," Berlini said. "This is at 13 mines, the majority owned by Anglo-American. Our target presently is to top 100,000 union members." The NUM national membership stands at 300,000.

Berlini is typical of the leaders who have emerged in these struggles. He is 31 years old and worked in the mining industry for eight years, "until I was dismissed for inciting workers to participate in a so-called illegal strike in 1988, when we were fighting the Labour Relations Amendment Act." He was then taken on as an organizer for the union.

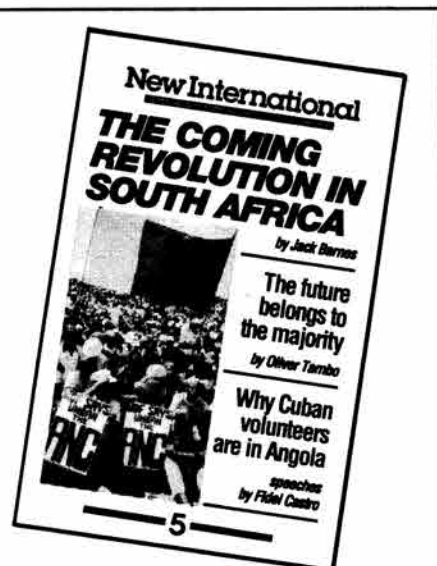
Unions in anti-apartheid struggle

The NUM is the largest affiliate of the million-member Congress of South African Trade Unions. In adopting the Freedom Charter, the principal programmatic document of the national, democratic movement, COSATU unions resolved to involve themselves in the broader democratic movement against apartheid. In particular they sought to link up with, and assist, the struggles waged by non-racial organizations based in the Black townships.

In Welkom the NUM has been playing an active role in the emerging township organizations. Union leaders like Berlini believe that the unions played a vital role in enabling the democratic movement to withstand the sustained onslaught of repression unleashed by the regime in 1986 with the state of emergency.

Today, despite the growing importance of manufacturing industries, mining still accounts for nearly a quarter of South African output and nearly two-thirds of all export earnings. Gold, diamonds, chrome, platinum, iron ore, manganese, antimony, and vanadium are all mined here. And coal is becoming increasingly important, not only as a source of fuel in a country without oil, but as an export earner.

Organized in a strong, fighting union like the NUM, the mine workers are turning the apartheid dream — of a capitalism without free workers — into a nightmare for South Africa's rulers.



This issue of *New International* focuses on the revolutionary struggle in South Africa, its impact throughout southern Africa and worldwide, and the tasks of opponents of apartheid in the labor movement internationally.

The feature article, *The Coming Revolution in South Africa* by Jack Barnes, discusses the national, democratic revolution to overthrow the South African apartheid regime and establish a nonracial democratic republic.

Also included:

- *The Freedom Charter*
- *The Future Belongs to the Majority*, a message by African National Congress President Oliver Tambo
- *Why Cuban Volunteers Are in Angola*, three speeches by Cuban President Fidel Castro

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What Hormel meatpackers' strike gained

No Retreat, No Surrender: Labor's War at Hormel by Dave Hage and Paul Klauda. New York: William Morrow & Co. 398 pp., \$22.95.

BY GALE SHANGOLD

AUSTIN, Minn. — Almost four years have passed since the 1985-86 meat-packers' strike against Geo. A. Hormel & Co. was defeated. Several books have recently appeared on the important struggle waged by United Food and Commercial Workers Local P-9 in this southern Minnesota town of 20,000.

One book is *Packing It In!* The author, Michael Fahey, crossed P-9's picket line in

IN REVIEW

February 1986 and worked in the plant two years so he could write the book. Another book, *On Strike at Hormel: The Struggle for a Democratic Labor Movement*, has just come out. Its author is Hardy Green, a consultant for Corporate Campaign, Inc.

Perhaps the most detailed and authoritative work so far is *No Retreat, No Surrender: Labor's War at Hormel*. The authors, Dave Hage and Paul Klauda, are reporters for the Minneapolis *Star Tribune*. They covered the strike for the *New York Times* as well.

The authors did a lot of research. As a result, *No Retreat, No Surrender* contains some useful information, history, and insights — and that's about it. Those unfamiliar with the struggle in Austin could get a confused, even false, picture of what the strike was all about.

There is plenty of background information that establishes why the strike took place.

Hormel workers had been organized by a strong union since 1933. By 1936 the union had firm control over working conditions in the plant — control won through struggle, including occasional sit-down work stoppages.

Among workers, Hormel came to be known as a good — in fact, very good — place to work. The book paints a picture of post-World War II prosperity in Austin, where in 1951, "three out of four Austin workers owned their homes."

Conditions change in industry

By the late 1970s, though, conditions in the meat-packing industry had begun to change, as the stagnation and decline of the U.S. capitalist economy as a whole deepened.

In 1983 Wilson Foods Corp., the biggest U.S. hog packer, declared bankruptcy and cut wages at seven plants by 40 percent. Overnight, workers' base pay dropped from \$10.69 an hour to \$6.50 an hour. One plant was in Albert Lea, 20 miles west of Austin.

Wages at John Morrell and Swift Independent Packing were also slashed, after both companies threatened to close plants unless cuts were accepted. "Armour was sold to ConAgra, which shut down 13 plants on one Friday afternoon and reopened them the following week with nonunion workers earning \$6.00 an hour," Hage and Klauda write.

A period of mergers, acquisitions, plant



Militant/Tom Jaax

April 12, 1986. More than 5,000 P-9 strikers and supporters from 40 states marched through streets of Austin. Far from being a "tragedy," as authors of *No Retreat, No Surrender* suggest, the Hormel strike inspired working people around the country.

closings, and Chapter 11 bankruptcies opened, as meat-packers scrambled to shore up declining profits. Workers were hit by layoffs and the deterioration of wages and working conditions.

In Austin 1978 was a pivotal year. Under the threat to build its new flagship plant elsewhere, Hormel forced a major concession contract on Local P-9. The pact included a seven-year no-strike clause, agreement that past practices in the old plant would not set a precedent in the new one, and that 20 percent higher production standards would be required.

From 1982 to 1984, Hormel hired in 755 new workers. "They learned the ropes from the plant's embittered veterans, packers who had watched their employer slowly evolve from the paternalistic family firm of their parents' stories into a modern, aggressive, highly competitive corporation," write Hage and Klauda.

The speed-up, increasing injury rate, new technology like presharpened knives and colder room temperatures, loss of incentive pay, harsher rules and discipline, and weakening of the seniority system made the new Hormel plant seem a world apart from the old one.

In October 1984 wages were cut 23 percent, dropping from \$10.69 an hour to \$8.25. Hormel justified the move on the grounds that its basic wage rate was higher than the rest of the industry.

Contract runs out

P-9 did not strike at that time because a strike was ruled illegal until the seven-year no-strike clause of the 1978 agreement ran out in August 1985.

Both Hormel and Local P-9 began to prepare for the contract's expiration. The local hired Ray Rogers' New York-based Corporate Campaign, Inc., a group that researches and exposes the financial interests and ties of a targeted company — in this case, Hormel

— on the union's behalf.

Hormel's final contract offer included a \$10 hourly wage and a weakened seniority system. It eliminated the guaranteed annual wage and 52-week notice of layoffs. Its two-tier wage structure topped out at \$9 an hour for new employees.

Another crucial issue was safety — one of what the P-9ers called the "dignity" issues. In the last full year before the strike, there were 202 injuries for every 100 workers in the plant.

On August 14 Local P-9 members voted to reject the company's offer by 1,291 to 96. Three days later — for the first time in 52 years — P-9 was on strike. The walkout was reluctantly sanctioned by the UFCW International.

No Retreat, No Surrender does an adequate job of explaining what led to the strike. But when it comes to the strike itself and why Hormel packinghouse workers in their majority remained committed to it, the book is very weak. *Militant* readers will want to read Fred Halstead's pamphlet, *The 1985-86 Hormel Meat-Packers' Strike*, (New York: Pathfinder. \$1.95) to learn more about the heart of the strike struggle and the solidarity it inspired.

In *No Retreat, No Surrender*, P-9 President Jim Guyette, one of the strike leaders, is painted as "a demagogue who led his members over a cliff against their will."

Throughout the book, insinuations are made about union meetings where people were afraid to speak their minds, contract proposals that were misrepresented to the members by Guyette, and the P-9 majority being violence-prone — although at the end of the book the authors admit this was not a violent strike.

By criticizing Guyette, P-9's executive board, and the Corporate Campaign's role in the Hormel strike, Hage and Klauda do a big disservice to the P-9 membership. They miss one of the strike's most important features

— the rank and file's participation in activity and decision-making in every aspect of the fight. P-9ers were not sheep being led to the slaughter. Just the opposite.

Participants, not spectators

This long book spends too little space describing how the P-9 members took their union back. After decades of being little more than a bureaucratic dues-collecting machine, P-9 became a union where the members were participants, not spectators.

During the strike, well-attended union meetings were held daily. Mass rallies were organized and roving picket lines sent to other Hormel plants. The local sent speakers to cities and towns around the country.

Were mistakes made during the course of the strike? Of course. How could it be otherwise? The labor movement was sorely out of shape when the Hormel strike started and continuity with labor struggles of the 1930s and '40s had been broken.

The authors seem to think the massive concessions the labor movement experienced in the 1980s were a good solution to employers' problems. "As Harvard economist Richard Freeman pointed out," say Hage and Klauda, "P-9 was the exception not the rule, in labor relations during the 1980s. The nation's collective bargaining system responded with flexibility, not rigidity, to economic recession."

But if P-9 was an exception, it was because the local was one of the first unions in a long time to say, "Enough is enough! What is good for Hormel is not good for us." By resisting instead of knuckling under, the fighters at Hormel helped the labor movement break out of what had become a virtual rout in the face of the capitalists' profit drive.

On Jan. 13, 1986, Hormel tried to open up the struck plant to scabs, though few got by the strikers' picket lines and demonstrations. A week later, Minnesota's Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party governor, Rudy Perpich sent the National Guard into Austin. By January 23 the Guard was herding scabs into the plant for Hormel. In March UFCW International officials lifted the strike sanction, having failed to convince P-9ers to accept a federal mediator's proposed settlement. The International attacked the local's attempts to gain broader solidarity, which included extending picket lines to other Hormel plants. In May they imposed a trusteeship on P-9. A new contract was signed in September 1986; soon after the strike ended.

Although P-9's strike against Hormel was defeated, it was far from being the "tragedy" Hage and Klauda suggest. The P-9ers' battle against concessions was waged under difficult conditions, in which they faced not only the company, National Guard, government, and courts, but a hostile International union leadership. Nevertheless, their fight inspired working people around the country and helped build confidence that it was possible to stand up to the employers. In strikes that followed, in meat-packing and in other industries, unionists learned from and built on the experiences of the Hormel fighters.

Broad resistance

The P-9 fight directly helped to open up a broad resistance among meat-packers that eventually involved thousands of workers in strikes and organizing struggles throughout the Midwest, into 1987. The P-9 leadership, however, remained too focused on the Austin situation after it became clear that the only way forward for their struggle and workers throughout the industry was to reach out to the other battles that were developing in meat-packing.

In January 1988 Hormel closed its cut-and-kill department and later leased it out to a new company, Quality Pork Processors. When QPP opened its doors in June 1989, the starting wage was from \$6.50 to \$7.00 an hour. The wages will eventually peak at about \$9.00 an hour.

Many P-9ers work at QPP since Hormel has hired very few of them back, even though many of them remain on a recall list.

The chain speed at QPP is faster than it was at Hormel when they decided to go on strike. For many of us who work at QPP, it is clear why P-9 went on strike. They surely saw the handwriting on the wall.

Gale Shangold works at Quality Pork Processors in Austin, Minnesota, and is in UFCW Local 9.

Australia: activist faces second trial

BY BOB ANDREWS

SYDNEY, Australia — Supporters of democratic rights have been campaigning here to expose the frame-up of political activist Tim Anderson.

Anderson, a teacher at Tranby Aboriginal College, was committed for trial February 9 on charges of murder stemming from a 1978 bombing outside the Hilton Hotel here.

Along with being active in the fight against apartheid in South Africa and solidarizing with the peoples in struggle in Latin America, Anderson has campaigned for the rights of the Aboriginal people and is a vocal critic of the police and prison system that victimizes them.

Three people were killed 12 years ago when a bomb detonated in a garbage bin outside the Hilton Hotel where a Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting was being held. A massive police- and media-orchestrated smear campaign blamed the religious group Ananda Marga for the bombing.

Ananda Marga, along with other political

groups, had organized a protest outside the hotel as part of a campaign for the release of a member of their group imprisoned in India. India's prime minister was attending the Commonwealth conference.

Anderson and two other members of Ananda Marga were arrested and brought to trial on false charges of conspiring to murder a leader of the right-wing National Front.

The three were convicted based on the testimony of a police informer planted in the group and on police claims of verbal confessions. The police stooge also alleged that the three were responsible for the bombing of the hotel, but no charges were presented. In 1979 Anderson and the two others were sentenced to 16 years' imprisonment.

After a lengthy political campaign against the frame-up, a government inquiry into the case was opened. In 1985 the three activists were completely pardoned of the conspiracy charges and in 1987 paid the equivalent of US\$75,000 compensation each. A full inquiry into the hotel bombing was never held

and evidence pointed to police involvement.

Now, 12 years after the bombing, Anderson has been framed a second time over the incident.

The political activist was reindicted last May after a former cellmate of his began to allege that Anderson claimed responsibility for the bombing and told him so during their first conversation in prison 11 years ago. The prisoner faced new charges leveled against him recently of attempted escape and robbery. Another police witness has also appeared who "confessed" to the Hilton bombing, claiming Anderson was involved. The case is scheduled to come to trial in August or September.

Anderson has won wide support in Australia through the work of an active defense committee called the Campaign Exposing the Frame-up of Tim Anderson. For more information on the case or to send messages of support and donations write CEFTA, P.O. Box A737, Sydney South, NSW 2000, Australia.

1,500 protesters in New York demand: 'U.S. Hands off Cuba'

Continued from front page
sure the demonstration took place without major incidents.

Many passersby stopped and read the placards and banners with interest. Workers from shops and restaurants along the way left their work stations and came to look at what was going on. Many took leaflets explaining the aims of the demonstration.

At one dress shop, a young clerk stepped into the window display and standing among the manikins jumped up and down holding a placard that read: "U.S. hands off Cuba." A few seconds later her boss showed up and made her step down.

Many who marched learned about the demonstration through the more than 70,000 leaflets that were distributed around the city prior to the action. "I saw a leaflet on a lamp post on 48th Street," said a young participant, "And I came because I think what the United States is doing to Cuba is an injustice. The United States should respect the sovereignty of other countries and not treat them as puppets."

A young South African student from Albany, New York, came to the march because he is "upset with the arrogance of U.S. imperialism to other countries."

Student groups came from several New York-area campuses, including New York University and Bard College.

"I think this is an important mobilization," said Leslie Cagan, one of the coalition leaders, "especially now when it's clear the U.S. government will focus everything it can to undermine the Cuban revolution."

"We have to be especially vigilant," Cagan pointed out, "in fighting against the economic, military, and propaganda war that Washington is launching against Cuba. Regardless of what people think of the Cuban revolution, this is the time to activate the American people around the right of the Cuban people to self-determination."

"Our job is to get the U.S. government out of Cuba," Cagan added. "The first step we must take is to form a broad coalition to fight U.S. policies."

Cagan spoke at the Times Square rally. Among the other speakers were Esmeralda Brown from Women's Workshop on the Americas; William Kuntzler, civil-rights attorney; and Filiberto Ojeda Ríos from the Puerto Rican organization Los Macheteros. Journalist and activist Rosemary Mealy

Young socialists host open house following April 7 demonstration

NEW YORK — Full of enthusiasm and energy after a day of protests, 200 participants in the "Hands of Cuba" action gathered at the Pathfinder Bookstore in Manhattan at an open house sponsored by the Young Socialist Alliance and Socialist Workers Party.

They came to meet Dick McBride and Don Mackle, Socialist Workers Party candidates for U.S. Senate in West Virginia and New Jersey, and to talk about the success of the day's action with other activists. Josefina Otero, a striker against Eastern Airlines from Philadelphia, and McBride addressed the gathering.

"I think working people here should be able to travel to Cuba," McBride insisted. Washington "should lift the travel ban and we should be able to see what working people are accomplishing in Cuba."

"They don't have capitalists in Cuba," McBride said, "and it's the responsibility of workers there to lead society. It's that responsibility that we here have to take on if we are going to alter and change society." The socialist candidate explained that his statements on Cuba have been played on radio and appeared in newspapers throughout southern West Virginia.

"We have a wonderful fight ahead of us, a chance for young people to put an end forever to capitalist rule. Join us," he urged, "Join the Young Socialist Alliance. Join us to fight to demand: 'Leave the Cuban people alone!'"

Seven young people took up the challenge and joined the YSA. —S.N.

read a transcript of remarks made by Nelson Mandela, leader of the African National Congress of South Africa, at the celebration of Namibian independence last month. Mandela thanked the Cuban people "for what Cuba is doing, especially in Africa."

'Smash TV Marti'

Dressed in cardboard boxes to resemble TV sets and wearing wire "antennas," a contingent from the Nicaragua Solidarity Network marched and danced to the beat of a drum. "Smash TV Marti" were the words painted on the screens. "Stop U.S. tele invasion of Cuba" read one of their banners.

Also marching to the beat of music and wearing hats identifying them with their organization, members of the Dominican Workers Party chanted "Cuba sí, bloqueo no!" (Cuba yes, blockade no!), referring to the U.S. government's embargo policy against Cuba.

There were also contingents of the Bloque Socialista, Committee in Solidarity with the Dominican People, Dominican Communist Party, Coordinadora Latinoamericana, Antonio Maceo Brigade, Venceremos Brigade, Vets for Peace Inc., Casa de las Américas, Young Socialist Alliance, Communist Party USA, People's Antiwar Mobilization, Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador, and others.

Demonstrators came from several cities, including Albany; Philadelphia; Baltimore; Birmingham, Alabama; Boston; Detroit; Miami; Hartford, Connecticut; Los Angeles; Minneapolis; San Francisco; as well as from

Washington, D.C.

Holding signs that read, "Africa called ... Cuba answered. U.S. hands off Cuba!" 100 marched from Harlem and joined the demonstration at Times Square. The contingent had assembled earlier in front of Hotel Teresa on 125th Street. Speaking at a rally there, Elombe Brath of the Patrice Lumumba Coalition explained how in 1960 Cuban leader Fidel Castro had moved his delegation to the Teresa from a downtown hotel and was greeted by thousands of Harlemites.

Brath pointed to the historic role Cuba has played in Africa and the strong bonds that exist between the Black community in the United States and the Caribbean country.

The day's events concluded with the rally at the Cuban mission to the UN, where participants applauded enthusiastically in approval of a letter to be sent to Cuban President Fidel Castro in the name of the action. Don Rojas, one of the coalition organizers, read the letter pledging continued actions to demand Washington's hands off Cuba and calling for the normalization of relations between Cuba and the United States.

Other speakers at the rally included Marshall García, vice-president Hospital Employees Local 1199; Don Mackle, Socialist Workers Party; Doris Pizarro, Puerto Rican Socialist Party; Kenneth Jones, Venceremos Brigade; William Gerena, Communist Party USA; Deirdre Griswold, Workers World Party; Nomazizi Sokudela from the African National Congress; Kwame Toure, formerly Stokely Carmichael, leader of the All African

Rightists hold counter action

BY YVONNE HAYES

NEW YORK — In an effort to counter the April 7 "U.S. Hands Off Cuba" demonstration, 1,000 opponents of the Cuban revolution rallied here the same afternoon. "USA, USA," "Cuba sí, Russia no!" and "We want TV Marti!" they chanted.

A leaflet the same color and design as the U.S. Hands Off Cuba Coalition flyer demanded, "USSR hands off Cuba!" and called for enforcement of the U.S. trade and travel ban. Among the sponsors listed were the Cuban Patriotic Council, National Anti-communist Liberation Army, Oliver North Brigade No. 1, and Alpha 66 — a paramilitary outfit that has been training in Florida's swamps for three decades.

Most of the demonstrators were Cuban émigrés in their 50s and 60s. "I left in 1961," said one man. "I was a political prisoner under Castro." He declined to give details on the Cuban government's charges against him.

An older woman held a sign that read, "Equal rights for Cuban women." When asked to explain, a young man next to her said, "Women in Cuba can't speak for themselves. Cuba has been run by a male-dominated clique for 30 years." The woman remained silent during the interview.

Numerous signs referred to the events in Eastern Europe: "Castro = Stalin = Ceausescu" and "Communism's dead; the party's over." "Noriega, Ortega, now it's Castro's turn," read another. "What we want is free elections like Nicaragua," said an older man.

An 18-year-old explained he was there because of his parents. "I'm not Cuban. I'm from New Jersey," he said.

"I can't believe they are having that demonstration promoting communism in Cuba," said a 34-year-old Black woman from Patterson, New Jersey, who left Cuba in 1960. "In my country there is no food, no freedom, no medicine."

"We're here to support self-determination for Cuba. We're not for U.S. intervention," another woman said. "The Cuban people should determine their destiny. How can the American left fail to see this?"

"Most of those people aren't Cuban," a man from Brooklyn said, referring to the participants in the "U.S. Hands Off Cuba" action. "They are Latin Americans who are very confused."

A few small groups of men, some draped in Alpha 66 flags, circulated outside the "U.S. Hands Off Cuba" demonstration, trying to provoke a confrontation.

Similar actions have been held outside the Cuban mission to the United Nations in re-

cent weeks, including a demonstration of 3,000 on February 24. The April 7 rally was called after the U.S. Hands Off Cuba Coalition publicized its intent to demonstrate in defense of Cuban sovereignty. The right-wing rally and march was promoted daily in a provocative tone by *Noticias del Mundo*, the Spanish-language paper affiliated with the Unification Church. Its headline of April 6, for example, read, "Castristas no pasarán" (The Castroists will not pass).

Week 2 of British prison takeover

Continued from front page

one. They have been locked up for all but 11 hours a week. Prisoners who have given up the occupation also complained of physical and mental brutality, poor food, and the misuse of drugs in "controlling" prisoners.

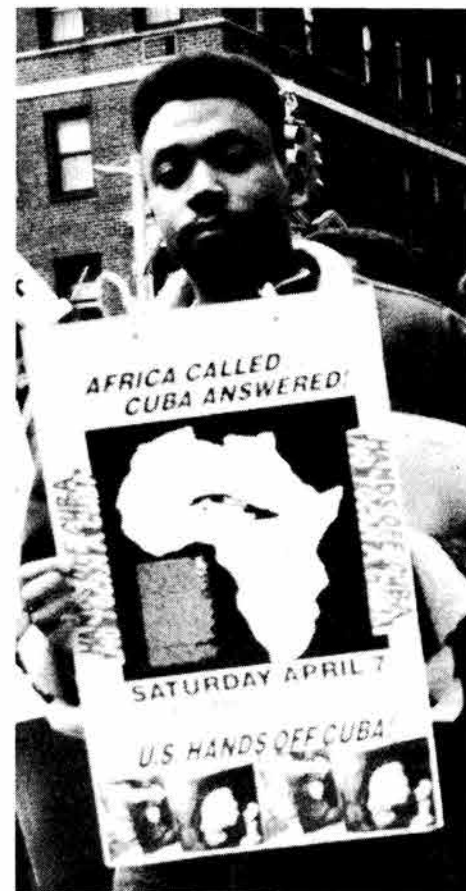
Paul Taylor, a spokesperson for the prisoners, addressed the media from the Strangeways prison roof through a makeshift bullhorn to explain that it was the inhuman conditions that led the prisoners to occupy the prison — although they had initially only meant to hold a sit-in. Up until then, the protesters had been presented in the media as mindless thugs through lurid reports of deaths, mutilation, and torture of prisoners convicted of sex offenses.

One of the first banners they put up proclaimed, "No deaths." One person has since died as a result of injuries sustained during the initial occupation. But the press was claiming there had been up to 12 killings. Subsequent attempts by prisoners to talk to the media have been drowned out by what one newspaper called "Noriega noise tactics" — a reference to the blaring of sirens and blasting of pop music outside the Vatican embassy in Panama by the U.S. invading force where Manuel Noriega had sought asylum.

Diet of cabbage

Many of the protesters are on remand, awaiting trial. In an interview outside Strangeways, a prisoner's mother told *Militant* reporters that her son had been eight months awaiting trial. He had been refused newspapers for which she had paid and was effectively living on a diet of cabbage. The prisoners discovered in the course of their occupation stores of meat that had been denied them by the authorities.

Given the wide public knowledge of the



Militant/Janet Post

Participant in April 7 action

People's Revolutionary Party; Phillip Agee, former CIA operative; Viola Plummer, December 12 Coalition.

The U.S. Hands Off Cuba Coalition will hold its next meeting April 17 at 7:00 p.m. at Casa de las Américas, 104 West 14th Street in Manhattan.

SEATTLE — To the strains of Cuban music and chants of "Cuba stand strong, hit the Yankee hard!" 45 people gathered at Seattle's Pike Place Market April 7 to protest U.S. attacks on Cuba's sovereignty and to demand an end to TV Marti.

The protest was called by the Seattle chapter of the Venceremos Brigade and endorsed by 15 organizations and individuals, including the African National Congress, Seattle and Olympia chapters of the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador, Committee in Defense of Immigrant Rights, the Seattle Coalition Against Apartheid, Communist Party USA, Task Force on Central America of the Church Council of Greater Seattle, and the Socialist Workers Party.

barbaric conditions in the prisons, the government is facing political difficulties in sanctioning demands for more hard-line measures. The prisoners are barricaded in and have shown that they are likely to defend themselves against any assault. Having failed to demoralize those maintaining the protest through their noise tactics or by spraying the prison rooftops with high pressure water hoses, prison guards have taken to jeering the protesters.

Outside the prison gates, prisoners' families have been mounting a vigil with banners demanding an end to brutality and abuse of all prisoners. Ex-prisoners in support of the occupation told the *Militant* that those who have surrendered have been brutalized by warders. One had his fingers broken on the way to a different prison and another was stripped, put in paper clothes, and locked in solitary confinement with no food or water for 24 hours.

The prison protests are worsening other political problems facing the government — most notably anger against the poll tax. In an editorial headed "Mob violence in Britain," the *Financial Times* stated, "Britain has acquired an unenviable reputation for mob violence and thuggery in three areas — football grounds, prisons, and now the pavements of central London itself."

It concluded, "Society is becoming divided between a majority of aspiring and affluent citizens and a minority on the edge of an underclass."

On a similar note, the *Economist*, a weekly magazine, editorialized on a "Violent Britain — a nastier brand of politics faces a weakened government." It stated, "It has been a lousy week for British self-esteem and for Mrs. Thatcher's struggling government."

Mark Weinstein and Sarah Goff in Manchester contributed to this article.

FLORIDA

Miami

Eastern Europe: The Crisis of Stalinism. Translation to Spanish. Sat., April 14, 7:30 p.m. 137 NE 54th St. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (305) 756-1020.

Cuba Today. An eyewitness report by Rosa Garmendia, Young Socialist Alliance. Translation to Spanish. Sat., April 21. Dinner, 5:30 p.m.; program, 7:30 p.m. 137 NE 54th St. Donations: dinner \$3.50; program \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (305) 756-1020.

GEORGIA

Atlanta

Haiti Today: Working People Struggle for Freedom. Speaker: Pat Hunt, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., April 14. Dinner, 6 p.m.; program, 7:30 p.m. 132 Cone St. NW, 2nd floor. Donation: \$5. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (404) 577-4065.

MARYLAND

Baltimore

Stop Union-Busting! Support the Eastern and Greyhound Strikes. Speakers: Jack Neill, Eastern striker at Baltimore-Washington International Airport, member International Association of Machinists Local 846; Edward Hill, Baltimore picket captain for Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1610 on strike against Greyhound. Sat., April 14. Dinner, 6 p.m.; program 7:30 p.m. 2913 Greenmount Ave. Donations: dinner \$3; forum, \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (301) 235-0013.

MICHIGAN

Detroit

Days of Rage. Video on the Palestinian uprising followed by representative of the Palestine Aid Society with update on the *intifada*. Sat., April 14, 7:30 p.m. 5019½ Woodward Ave. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (313) 831-1177.

MINNESOTA

Austin

The Coming Revolution in South Africa. Speakers: Urule Igbovboa; representative of Socialist Workers Party. Showing of video on the 1988 defeat of South African troops at Cuito Cuanavale, Angola. Sun., April 22, 7 p.m. 407½ N Main St. Donation: \$2.50. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (507) 433-3461.

St. Paul

Zionism, Racism, and Anti-Semitism. Speaker: Will Reissner, Socialist Workers Party, member International Association of Machinists Local 1833. Sat., April 21, 7:30 p.m. 508 N Snelling Ave. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (612) 644-6325.

The Struggle for Independence in the Soviet Republics. Sat., April 28, 7:30 p.m. 508 N Snelling Ave. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (612) 644-6325.

MISSOURI

St. Louis

Support the Greyhound Strike. Panel of Greyhound strikers and supporters. Sat., April 14, 7:30 p.m. 4907 Martin Luther King Dr. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (314) 361-0250.

NEW JERSEY

Newark

Workers Speak Out Against Corporate Pollution. Speakers: Mary Dunlevy, member Teamsters Local 877, Exxon; Mary Roche, Socialist Workers Party, member Local 877; Grady Fitzgerald, legislative coordinator, Mail Handlers Local 300, environmental activist in Coalition of PJP toxic dump. Translation to Spanish and French. Sat., April 14, 7:30 p.m. 141 Halsey St., 2nd floor. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum/Foro Perspectiva Mundial. For more information call (201) 643-3341.

The Crisis in Education: A speak-out with Newark high school students. Sat., April 21, 7:30 p.m. 141 Halsey St., 2nd floor. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum/Foro Per-

spectiva Mundial. For more information call (201) 643-3341.

NEW YORK

Brooklyn

Conversation with Cuban Artist Héctor Catá. Sat., April 14, 7:30 p.m. 464 Bergen. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum/Foro Perspectiva Mundial. For more information call (718) 398-6983.

Manhattan

"Out of the Ashes." Exhibit of photographs of Triangle Shirtwaist fire and political drawings of the time. Tuesdays through Fridays until June 8, 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Lower East Side Tenement Museum, 97 Orchard St. For more information call (212) 431-0233.

Tear Down the Korean Wall! U.S. Troops Out of South Korea! Speaker: Peter Thierjung, Militant staff writer; Rev. Kiyul Chung. Sat., April 14, 7:30 p.m. 191 7th Ave. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (212) 675-6740.

Protecting Our Environment: A Marxist View. Speaker: Doug Jenness, editor of the *Militant*. Sat., April 21, 7:30 p.m. 191 7th Ave. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (212) 675-6740.

New York City

Behind the News. Radio program hosted by Don Rojas, former press secretary to slain Grenadian prime minister Maurice Bishop. Every Wed., 7-7:30 p.m. WBAI 99.5 FM.

TEXAS

Houston

The Palestinian Struggle Continues. Speaker: Sarah Ryan, Young Socialist Alliance. Sat., April 14, 7:30 p.m. 4806 Almeda. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum/Foro Perspectiva Mundial. For more information call (713) 522-8054.

Solidarity with Eastern and Greyhound Strikes. Speaker: Al Glover, strike coordinator for International Association of Machinists at Eastern; Mary Selvas, Socialist Workers Party, member IAM Local 517; representative of the Amalgamated Transit Union. Sat., April 21, 7:30 p.m. 4806 Almeda. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum/Foro Perspectiva Mundial. For more information call (713) 522-8054.

Destruction of the Environment: What Should Working People Do? Sat., April 28, 7:30 p.m. 4806 Almeda. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum/Foro Perspectiva Mundial. For more information call (713) 522-8054.

UTAH

Price

Action Program to Confront the Coming Economic Crisis. Speaker: Tony Dutrow, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Congress, 3rd C.D. Sun., April 22, 5 p.m. 253 E Main. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. Donation: \$2. For more information call (801) 637-6294.

WISCONSIN

Lac de Flambeau

Defend American Indian Treaty Rights! Protest racist attacks on Indian spearfishers. Sat., April 14, midafternoon.

BRITAIN

Cardiff

Behind the Prison Protests. Sat., April 21, 7:30 p.m. 9 Moira Terrace, Adamsdown. Donation: £1. Sponsor: New International Forums. For more information call 0222-484677.

NEW YORK CITY

Report back from South Africa Greg McCartan Margrethe Siem

Militant correspondent and photographer recently returned from reporting on the upheaval in South Africa after the release of Nelson Mandela.

**Sat., April 28, 7:30 p.m.
191 Seventh Ave.
(at West 21st St.)
Manhattan**

Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (212) 675-6740.

London

Solidarity with the Eastern Airlines Strike. Speaker: Paul Davidson, member Amalgamated Engineering Union. Fri., April 20, 7:30 p.m. 47 The Cut, SE 1. Donation: £1. Sponsor: New International Forums. For more information call 01-928-7947.

CANADA

Montréal

German Reunification: What Does It Mean for Working People? Speaker: Susan Berman, Central Committee of Communist League, member Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union. Sat., April 14, 7:30 p.m. 6566, boul. Saint-Laurent. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Forum Lutte Ouvrière. For more information call (514) 273-2503.

Toronto

Hands Off Cuba! Political and Cultural Celebration, 29th Anniversary of Playa Girón. Speakers, greetings from special guests, film showing of *The Uncompromising Revolution*. Fri., April 20, 7:30 p.m. Harbord Collegiate, 286 Harbord (3 blocks west of Bathurst). Donation: \$3. Coordinated by Committee for Defence of Sovereignty and Self-determination for the Peoples.

FRANCE

Lyons

Seven Hours for Cuba. Speakers: Fernando Flores Ibarra, Cuban ambassador to France; Solly Smity, representative of African National Congress of South Africa in France; Edy Amkongo, representative of South West Africa People's Organisation. Sat., April 21, 4-11 p.m. Centre Culturel Oecumenique, 39 rue Georges Courteline, Zilleurbanne. Sponsor: France-Cuba Association.

NEW ZEALAND

Christchurch

Fund-Raising Event for Pathfinder Books. Sat., April 21, 7 p.m. 593a Colombo St. (upstairs). Sponsor: Socialist Forum. For more information call (3) 656-055.

Che Guevara and the Fight for Socialism in Cuba

Hear

Carlos Tablada

Cuban economist and author of *Che Guevara: Economics and Politics in the Transition to Socialism*, currently on a U.S. speaking tour.

CALIFORNIA

San Francisco

Sat., April 21, 7:30 p.m. ILWU Local 34, 4 Berry St. Donation: \$5. For more information call (415) 282-6255 or 420-1165.

Stanford

Speaking with José Antonio Burciaga, Casa Zapata; Sue Severin, longtime Witness for Peace delegate to Bluefields, Nicaragua. Fri., April 20, 7:30 p.m. Casa Zapata, Stern Hall, Stanford University. Donation requested. For more information call (415) 326-8837.

NORTH CAROLINA

Chapel Hill

Tues., April 24, 7 p.m. Toy Lounge, Dey Hall, University of North Carolina. For more information call (919) 272-5996.

UTAH

Salt Lake City

Tues., April 17, 12 noon, University of Utah Challenge Lecture Series, Ballroom, Olpin Union; 7 p.m., The Little Theater, Olpin Union, U of U. For more information call (801) 355-1124.

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Christchurch: 593a Colombo St. (upstairs). Postal address: P.O. Box 22-530. Tel: (3) 656-055.

Wellington: 23 Majoribanks St., Courtenay Pl. Postal address: P.O. Box 9092. Tel: (4) 844-205.

SWEDEN

Stockholm: Vikingagatan 10. Postal code: S-113 42. Tel: (08) 31 69 33.

Now will you bundle those papers? — To advance its recycling program, New York's sanitation department will have an outreach and education staff of 26, plus 177



Harry Ring

armed sanitation police. A city official who takes a dim view of the gun-toting cops argues that "people will be alienated by this kind of strategy."

Flying Eastern? Watch your

step! — Taking off from Washington to Boston, a scab Eastern pilot ignored an indicator light which signaled that the rear stairway wasn't locked. Meanwhile, he dragged the stairs along the runway until takeoff, telling the control tower the problem would be checked when they got to Boston. When the tower advised the stairs were hanging down, the plane returned for an emergency landing.

Maybe Thatcher could use it — In Birmingham, England, an underground bomb shelter built in 1956 to house key officials during a nuclear attack, is now up for sale. Asking price, £250,000.

A real English speaker — A Cape Cod reader advises that in a

TV appearance, a spokesperson for one of the "English only" organizations declared that he doesn't want the movement mixed up with "racism and bigamy."

Oh — Israeli army figures on the number of Palestinians killed in the uprising are always lower than those compiled by journalist, human rights organizations, and Palestinians. An April 4 *New York Times* dispatch explains that this is so "largely because Palestinians often take bodies away from hospitals before the army can record the death."

A reasonable mark-up — According to an airlines expert cited in the *Boston Globe*, the profit on the \$119 New York-to-Boston shuttle

fares of Trump and Pan Am is \$69.45.

Low-down pushers — Researchers said that cereals with high sugar content are invariably found clustered on lower market shelves. They said this is done because children recognize name brands and lean on their parents to buy them. The champ, they said, is Ralston Purina's Ghostbusters — 64 percent sugar.

Our expanding health services — In Miami, if Fido is poorly and not up to a trip in the family jalopy, call Knowles Animal Hospital, which will send a pet ambulance. One way, \$20 to \$50, depending on distance.

Good grief — If you want to celebrate the 40th anniversary of Peanuts properly, check out Cartier's solid-gold figurine of Snoopy. \$5,000.

The shoes were for kicking commies — Imelda Marcos' lawyer, Gerry Spence, told the jury that the \$220 million she and spouse Ferdinand stashed abroad was so that if they got run out, they wouldn't find themselves "unable to afford to mount a counterrevolution against communists."

Thought for the week — "If Mr. Marcos was engaged in a racket, then so was the CIA." — Attorney Spence, arguing that the CIA was aware of every transaction the Marcoses made.

Guevara and the transition to socialism in Cuba

Continued from Page 5

Frederick Engels, the foremost leaders of the communist movement in the 19th century, and those of V.I. Lenin, the central leader of the October 1917 Russian revolution.

Marx didn't live to see a socialist revolution. But from his study of how capitalism works, he assumed that one of the first challenges for a socialist government would be to determine how the social product — that is, the total goods and services produced by working people — would be distributed. It couldn't simply be divided equally among all the workers, he said. Part would have to be used for replacement of materials used up in production and to compensate for wear and tear of machinery. Another portion would need to be invested in expansion of production. Some would be needed for the costs of administration. Part would be used for social needs of workers, including education, health care, and housing, as well as for unemployment, disability, and old-age compensation. The remainder would be distributed to workers in the form of wages.

Under capitalism this distribution of the social product is determined blindly by the laws of the market and the profit needs of private owners. "Market operations are re-

Nicaraguan workers test strength in strikes at plastics, food plants

Continued from Page 8

ments. But the officials repeated their case several times nonetheless.

"Try to understand," one pleaded, "that we're heading into capitalism now. We've had 10 years of a government for working people, but now there's going to be an employers' government."

'You don't know what it's like out there'

CST representative Marvin Largaespada told the government officials that "it's not just the union officers, it's the workers" who are making demands. "You don't know what it's like out there," he said. The economic conditions workers face are unbearable, Centeno added.

The officials responded by trying to appeal to the union leaders' "sense of responsibility." Don't they understand that the economic development of the country is necessary for Sandinismo to survive? they asked. There was no response.

Finally, the ministry representatives tried to persuade the union leaders they were being naive. "Your ideas are beautiful, but romantic," argued one. He said the Ministry of Labor nonetheless appreciates that the unionists are "sticking with the Sandinista Workers Federation and with the FSLN." This is commendable, he said, since a number of other CST unions are disaffiliating from the federation.

"Think it over carefully. Remember we won't be here in a couple of weeks," one of the officials said as he stood to shake Centeno's hand.

Centeno thanked the mediators, but said he thought the workers would decide to continue the strike.

At an April 2 meeting, Polymer workers voted unanimously to stay out and not to accept anything less than their full demands.

sponsible for the automatic, anarchic, and brutal way in which proportions and equilibrium are established in capitalist society," Tablada writes.

Political consciousness is key

It's when the capitalists are gone that producers for the first time have the opportunity to make decisions about the economy by conscious design and according to a plan. Tablada notes that Guevara believed "the development of consciousness must be the strategic objective of the first social system ever to be constructed in a conscious way."

By developing consciousness Guevara meant increasing social and political understanding and human solidarity; that is, communist consciousness. He believed that the "effectiveness of the plan cannot be evaluated solely by whether it improves economic management and, therefore, augments the goals available to society," Tablada states. "Nor can it be evaluated by the earnings obtained in the production process."

"The real measure of the plan's effectiveness lies in its potential to improve economic management in terms of advancing toward the central objective: communist society."

One of the big challenges in beginning to develop communist consciousness is the legacy of habits carried over from capitalist society, including personal ambition and self-centeredness. Guevara recognized that while there was much that socialists can learn from capitalists about accounting, organization, and implementation of controls in enterprises and production, he opposed relying on those elements of capitalist society that would reinforce the old competitive dog-eat-dog attitudes, making it impossible to move ahead toward communist society.

Among the categories that he thought should be restricted and then eliminated as quickly as possible were the market, interest, direct material incentives, and profit. Guevara "thought that socialism could not be built using the elements of capitalism without changing the real meaning of socialism," Tablada notes. "Taking such a road would produce a hybrid system that would require new concessions to capitalist economic levers and would therefore lead to a retreat."

To avoid this danger Guevara proposed and began to implement a number of steps. Chiefly, he believed that state-run enterprises should not be treated like capitalist units competing with each other for profits.

"We view the entire economy as one big enterprise," Guevara wrote. "In the framework of building socialism, our aim is to establish collaboration between all the participants as members of one big enterprise, instead of treating each other like wolves."

Each production unit, Guevara said, turns its revenues over to the national budget — that is, it does not accumulate them to distribute among the workers in a single plant or to invest according to its own decision. The enterprise withdraws funds from the state bank in accordance with a financial plan. Money becomes an accounting device like it is used between divisions of a large capitalist corporation, rather than a medium of commodity exchange.

"As the plan is being drawn up and implemented," Tablada explains, "the mechanisms of the party, the unions, and other organizations can serve as channels between the government and the masses to communicate concerns, complaints, and suggested corrections

to the plan."

As part of this approach, which Guevara called the "budgetary finance system," he promoted and helped organize voluntary work, that is, work "done outside one's normal working hours, without additional economic payment." Not only would this increase production, he said, but more importantly it would begin the process of workers seeing their work as part of advancing the collective interest of society, and not just in their own interest.

Che's ideas not implemented

In a speech given on the 20th anniversary of Guevara's death and included in the Pathfinder edition of Tablada's book, Fidel Castro said, "At a given moment some of Che's ideas were incorrectly interpreted and, what's more, incorrectly applied. Certainly no serious attempt was ever made to put them into practice, and there came a time when ideas diametrically opposed to Che's economic thought began to take over."

In the period after Guevara was murdered in Bolivia in 1967, Cuba went much more fully over to a version of the planning models widely used in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. These, to one degree or another, counted on the mechanism of the plan itself to keep production increasing. They applied elements from capitalism, including profits, interest, widespread use of bonuses and other material incentives, and market mechanisms. Political understanding and communist education, as well as voluntary work, played little or no role in this kind of setup, and in fact, attitudes and practices from the capitalist world were reinforced.

—10 AND 25 YEARS AGO—

THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWSPAPER PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

April 18, 1980

A vast new frame-up against the Cuban revolution is under way. The U.S. government and media are using the events at the Peruvian embassy in Havana to smear Cuba as one big island prison.

They claim that the reason thousands have descended on the embassy is that the Cuban government has reversed its alleged previous policy of refusing to let people leave Cuba.

The fact is that the policy of the Cuban government, from the very beginning of the revolution, has been to allow anybody who wants to leave Cuba to do so.

It is true that there are people in Cuba who want to get out and can't. The reason is that capitalist governments — in the first place, the U.S. government — are not willing to take them in, severely restricting the number of visas they will grant.

The *New York Times* noted, "The United States and Spain are virtually the only countries accepting immigrants from Cuba, which has granted far more exit permits than there are opportunities to leave" (emphasis added).

The Cuban government has told the people at the Peruvian embassy that they are free to go to any country that will accept them. It has provided food, water, toilets, and medical care for them. It has offered safe-conduct

passes so they can travel back and forth between the embassy and their homes.

THE MILITANT

Published in the Interests of the Working People

April 19, 1965

Price 10c

The following is an excerpt from a speech on the U.S. war in Vietnam given by Fidel Castro on March 13, 1965.

Before the concrete case of a country attacked by imperialism, like Vietnam, we have one position. We don't act, as perhaps some think, as perhaps above all the imperialists think, on the basis of "when you see your neighbor's house on fire, you throw water on your own roof." The way we act is, when we see our neighbor's house on fire, we want to share this difficulty.

We are not people to be frightened by these events; rather we are kindled to action by them. And we have one position. We are in favor of giving Vietnam all the aid that may be necessary; we are in favor of this aid being arms and men; we are in favor of the socialist camp running the risks that may be necessary for Vietnam.

We are quite aware of the fact that in case of any serious international complication we will be one of the first targets of imperialism, but this does not worry us and has never worried us.

April 7 march: a new beginning

The "U.S. Hands Off Cuba" demonstration held in New York City April 7 was a historic victory for all those who oppose Washington's decades-long policy of aggression against Cuba. The protest through the streets of midtown Manhattan was the largest such action in the United States in more than 25 years. It took place at a time when Cuba faces the most serious threats and attacks since the 1961 Bay of Pigs invasion and the 1962 "missile crisis," during which Washington imposed a total naval blockade of Cuba and threatened nuclear war.

April 7 marks the beginning of a new protest movement to demand the U.S. government leave Cuba alone.

The fact that supporters of Cuba's sovereignty confidently took to the streets will inspire others around the country and around the world who are opposed to Washington's anti-Cuban belligerence.

A political campaign was waged by march organizers and supporters before April 7 to demand the New York City administration guarantee the right of the demonstration to take place without disruption. This campaign helped make the "U.S. Hands Off Cuba" march an attractive action for those activists and fighters who were looking for an opportunity to openly express their opposition to Washington's provocations.

The fact that the action took place as planned and that participants stood up to threats and intimidation and did not let themselves be provoked by right-wing forces was also a big victory.

The success of this protest paves the way for more demonstrations like it. These can and will begin to attract more and broader forces from the campuses, farmlands, and workplaces where interest in learning the truth about Cuba is growing.

April 7 will help spark the formation of "U.S. Hands Off Cuba" coalitions throughout the United States and internationally. Such coalitions can unite broad forces who, despite diverse views on the Cuban revolution, will be able to stand shoulder to shoulder to demand: No to Washington's intervention in Cuba!

Working people in the United States have no stake in supporting Washington's hostility towards Cuba. We have no interest in violation of Cuba's airspace, in shooting at Cuban cargo ships, or in allowing counterrevolutionary Cuban exiles to carry out military training here.

We have nothing to gain from Washington's economic blockade against Cuba or in allowing the continued presence of U.S. military forces at the Guantánamo naval base located on Cuban soil.

Nor do working people here have a stake in supporting the broadcast war against Cuba escalated by Washington's launching of TV Martí. This latest act of hostility openly attacks Cuba's sovereignty by violating its telecommunications space. Even though Cuban engineers have been able to jam the transmissions so far, Washington has not given up its television aggression.

On the other hand, unionists, farmers, students, Black rights and women's rights fighters, and other activists have everything to gain from opening up communication and travel with this Caribbean island just 90 miles off the Florida coast. Every blow to Washington's plan to further isolate Cuba and to deny the Cuban people the democratic right to determine their own destiny strengthens our fight here to retain and extend our own democratic rights.

Washington's ban on travel to Cuba denies U.S. residents — with precious few exceptions — the democratic right to see for themselves what Cuba has accomplished since freeing itself from the dictates of U.S. multinational corporations 31 years ago.

By bringing to power a government that represents their interests and by abolishing capitalism, Cuban working people have been able to move forward in a way that stands as an example for toilers of the entire world.

Despite the stranglehold of a U.S. economic blockade, the Cuban people have built a society where the curse of massive unemployment has disappeared and where free education and health care are rights enjoyed by all.

They have made huge strides in the fight to advance women's position in society and to overcome the centuries-old legacy of racism. And they have provided an unequalled example of internationalism, giving selflessly — whether it's doctors, soldiers, or teachers — whenever they've been asked for help by others struggling against imperialism.

The U.S. ruling rich fear the example of the gains made by the Cuban people and their revolution. They fear the ability of socialist Cuba to inspire millions — not only in Latin America but in the United States as well — to follow their lead by taking hold of our own destiny and building a society that serves human needs not profits.

Cuba is not a threat to working people in the United States in any way. What is a threat is the real possibility of a U.S. invasion that hangs over Cuba today.

April 7 was just the beginning. The challenge now is to move forward and continue building a movement across the country that will energetically demand: No to TV Martí. U.S. hands off Cuba!

Protest Cincinnati's censorship

The actions taken against the Contemporary Arts Center in Cincinnati and its director, Dennis Barrie, by police, city government officials, and other procensorship forces are an affront to the constitutional right of freedom of expression and should be halted immediately.

The gallery's exhibit of photographs by Robert Mapplethorpe, which opened April 7, was attended by hundreds within the first hours. Police then moved in, ordered visitors to leave, closed the gallery for more than an hour, videotaped the exhibit, and presented Barrie and the art center with indictments handed down by a nine-member grand jury. Barrie and the gallery face three misdemeanor charges — two of "pandering obscenity" and one of "illegal use of a minor in nudity oriented material."

Protesting the police action, 1,000 demonstrators gathered outside the center chanting, "Gestapo go home!" and "Simon Leis is the one who's warped — Keep your hands off Mapplethorpe!" They were referring to Hamilton County Sheriff Leis who is spearheading the censorship moves against the gallery. Earlier targets of Leis' "antipornography" censorship drive have included the musical *Hair* and the play *Equus*.

On April 8 a federal judge issued a restraining order barring local authorities from closing down the exhibit or removing the works. "People are saying that this is the stand that should have been taken in Washington, D.C.,

last year," said one board member of the Cincinnati Arts Center.

Mapplethorpe's 175-photograph exhibit, which includes photographs of nude children and homosexual and sadomasochistic images, sparked national controversy and debate over government funding of the arts last summer when the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington canceled the exhibit of his photographs. It was eventually shown in that city by the Washington Project for the Arts.

Barrie and the arts center were not the first targets of the Cincinnati city fathers' "antipornography" crusade. The city's statutes also bar adult bookstores and X-rated movies. Movie theaters in the city, afraid of running afoul of the city's unconstitutional statutes on obscenity, declined to show the film *The Last Temptation of Christ*.

Any moves to curb free speech and expression are a threat to all working people, unions, and other organizations they're part of — from groups supporting abortion rights to committees fighting to lift the U.S. blockade of Cuba.

A precedent that allows an art exhibit deemed obscene by Cincinnati's rulers to be shut down opens the door to wider moves to impose censorship. Working people and all supporters of democratic rights should stand firmly on the side of the Cincinnati art gallery and its director against the attempts by local authorities to close down the exhibit.

What happened to the Nicaraguan revolution

BY DOUG JENNESS

In her letter to the editor in this week's issue, Lois Remple disagrees that the February 25 election outcome "announced the defeat of the Nicaraguan revolution."

To determine whether or not there has been a defeat, it is necessary to look at what the main conquests of the revolution were.

In July 1979 the workers and peasants of Nicaragua mobilized to overthrow the hated Somoza tyranny. They completely smashed the armed power of the old regime and established a new government headed by the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN). They built a new army and a new police responsible to the revolutionary government.

Nicaragua's working people were armed, trained, and organized on a massive scale to defend the revolutionary

LEARNING ABOUT SOCIALISM

power. They demonstrated their determination and capacities by defeating the U.S.-backed counterrevolutionary mercenary forces.

(Here, Remple is wrong. The contras were decisively defeated militarily in the latter part of 1987. This does not mean that contra forays and killings in Nicaragua did not continue to occur, but the full-scale mercenary war that had taken such a costly toll was over.)

The FSLN-led government in the opening years of the revolution responded to the massive mobilizations of workers and peasants by carrying out a series of expropriations and other measures against capitalist property.

Governmental clout was used to help launch and strengthen unions and mass organizations of workers and of peasants. This went hand-in-hand with a stepped-up fight by women for equal rights and by indigenous peoples and peoples of African origin on the Atlantic Coast against national oppression.

The actions of the new FSLN-government, responding to the pressures of the workers and peasants and taking leadership initiatives in an anticapitalist as well as popular and anti-imperialist direction, determined its character as a workers' and farmers' government.

The formation of this government gave working people a powerful weapon to mobilize a fight against capitalist domination of the economy and significantly extend workers' control of production and workers' democracy throughout the country.

Such a course, which could only lead to expropriating the major capitalist holdings in industry and agriculture and the initiation of economic planning, was essential to defending the democratic and anti-imperialist gains of the revolution. It was the only way out of imperialist domination and economic superexploitation, which are ravaging working people throughout Latin America.

But the FSLN did not lead a course along this line. Over time the FSLN government began basing itself on long-term reliance on the workings of the capitalist market. This led away from deepening the inroads on the property and prerogatives of the exploiting class.

As the economic crisis deepened in Nicaragua's capitalist economy, the burdens fell most heavily on workers and peasants. But the FSLN leadership resisted mobilizing working people in city and country to extend workers' control over production and distribution and deepen the land reform.

Increasingly, the FSLN played by the rules of the capitalists. This was most clearly seen by the framework of the recent elections. They pointed to the national election as a means in and of itself of strengthening the revolution, miseducating an entire generation of fighters.

The deepening of democratic rights is progressive because it opens space for the exploited to organize and engage in politics. But such advances have a reality and are sustainable only if linked to the deepening of workers' struggles and the extension of mass organizations that can strengthen the fight to do away with capitalist exploitation. Bourgeois parliamentarism, however, depoliticizes workers and pushes them away from being the makers of their own destiny, a role they had begun to assume with the revolution.

The foundations of the government that had represented and defended Nicaragua's workers and peasants had eroded away even before the February elections. Following the elections, there can be no doubt that the government rests on capitalist foundations as the FSLN administration assumes the lead in helping to organize a smooth transition to Violeta Chamorro's administration.

The loss of the workers' and peasants' government — the principal conquest of the revolution — is a gigantic defeat and places working people in a much less favorable position than they were before. Not everything workers and peasants won has been taken away, but there will be an intensified fight needed to defend these gains. It will be out of this struggle and others that will be fought that a new movement will develop that can overturn capitalist political rule again, and if properly led, move toward expropriating the capitalists and head toward socialism.

Are Mexican workers to blame for auto layoffs?

BY ANDREA GONZÁLEZ

ST. LOUIS — When Chrysler Corp. recently announced plans to close one of its auto assembly plants in nearby Fenton, a coworker at the Ford assembly plant here came up to me on the line. He was livid. "Chrysler is putting all those guys on the street because of you people," he said.

At first I was confused about why I was to blame for the plant closing. Then I realized that he was repeating charges

UNION TALK

made by United Auto Workers officials at the Chrysler plant that "unfair competition" from Mexico had led to the plant being shut. (He didn't realize I'm Puerto Rican, not Mexican.)

Some 4,000 workers will be laid off when Chrysler's No. 1 Plant in Fenton closes in September. This comes on top of the permanent shutdown by General Motors and Chrysler of five other auto plants in the past two years.

Some 16,500 auto workers have been thrown out of work. In addition, thousands more UAW members have been hit by short-term layoffs as auto sales — especially of cars made in the United States — have sagged in recent months. It's no wonder that auto workers are more concerned than usual about layoffs and whether a major downturn in the auto industry is looming.

Where does Mexico fit into this picture? In the last 20 years, the "Big Three" auto makers have built assembly plants in Mexico. During the same period, dozens of U.S. companies including auto makers, have also built parts and subassembly plants, known as *maquiladoras*. In the *maquiladoras*, raw materials and parts shipped in from the United States are assembled — into instrument panels or steering columns, for example — and then shipped back to U.S. plants where they are used in final assembly. The *maquiladoras*, which are mostly located along the U.S.-Mexico border, employ 400,000 workers.

In January UAW Region 5 published a 16-page "Maquiladora Special Report." Articles in the report by UAW members who visited Mexico describe wages and working conditions in the plants. Wages range from \$.50 to

\$1.50 an hour. The working day is 10 hours long, with only two 10-minute breaks. If a worker is absent three times or late three times within a year, he or she can be fired. Although the work force in the *maquiladoras* is predominantly young — between 16 and 24 years old — and female, pregnancy is a basis for dismissal.

Ventilation and safety equipment are virtually nonexistent. Although most workers speak only Spanish, the chemicals used in some plants carry warnings printed only in English.

These harsh working conditions lead to a high turnover. The average time spent in the *maquiladoras* is only five years.

The UAW officialdom has not proposed supporting Mexican workers' struggles against these conditions as a focus of international solidarity for our union. Instead workers in Mexico have become the latest scapegoat for the auto companies' layoffs and plants closings.

Soon after the announcement of the Fenton plant closing, a demonstration was organized by New Directions, an opposition caucus in the UAW. The central demand of the protest was "export cars, not jobs."

Although many coworkers liked the demonstration, at least one I talked to thought it made the wrong point. The action, he said, was demanding that "Chrysler lay somebody else off" — that is, Chrysler workers in Mexico. He himself had been a victim of the auto industry's reorganizations in 1980-82, when scores of plants were closed and tens of thousands of workers were laid off. He had been idled from Ford for six years. Like other workers in this position, his standard of living dropped radically and he had to move across the country to take the job at Ford in St. Louis.

In the 1980-82 slump, some union members also called for "laying off someone else." This only divided the union and alienated other people, he recalled. "Everybody needs a job," he said. "So why should you deserve one more than the next guy?"

While the demonstration at Chrysler was going on, workers at the Ford assembly plant outside Mexico City were on strike, fighting for higher wages and other demands. News of the strike was limited to small write-ups in the *Post-Dispatch* and an announcement on TV monitors

in the Ford plant. Unfortunately, UAW officials said and did nothing to support our brothers and sisters in Mexico.

In February our UAW local stepped up its support for the Machinists on strike at Eastern Airlines. Local members helped build the rally to celebrate the Eastern strike's anniversary, which was held at our union hall on March 4. UAW members helped the striking Machinists with picketing.

Supporting the Eastern strike helped promote a spirit of unity and solidarity against Ford, which in turn made it easier to discuss the issue of *maquiladoras* and the need for solidarity with all working people — no matter what country they happen to live in.

Those of us who disagree with the commonly held view that plant shutdowns are the result of "importing cars and exporting jobs" were able to get a better hearing.

We explained that any fight against layoffs and plant closings must focus on the companies who make these decisions and not on other workers. We stressed the need to fight to shorten the workweek to 30 hours, with no cut in pay, in order to create jobs — a demand the UAW is on record supporting.

We also explained the importance of solidarity with the workers on strike at Ford in Mexico. The UAW had defaulted on its obligation to back these unionists, we said.

While most coworkers agreed that the UAW should back strikes against Ford by workers anywhere, they were not necessarily convinced that imports aren't a problem. "We live in the United States and we have to take care of ourselves first," was a common comment.

The discussion on imports died down as the local geared up for the Eastern strike rally.

It came up again after the action. On the way back from the airport walk-through, one coworker commented, "This was a great day. You can see where the rally and the walk-through really made a difference. But I don't see that the Chrysler action accomplished anything."

I agreed. The rally against Eastern accomplished something because it unified all of us against the real enemy — the bosses. The protest at Chrysler just pitched us against ourselves.

Andrea González is a member of United Auto Workers Local 325 at Ford's St. Louis assembly plant.

LETTERS

Truth about Cuba

Thank you for the beautiful articles about Cuba you ran in the March 9 issue. Many people in this country don't really know the truth about my country's government, and those who do know the truth don't talk about it. Our country and government is dragged through the mud just for the sake of a pair of Levis.

Believe me — Cuba is a beautiful island and the government of our President Fidel Castro Ruz is the government we want. He has done a lot for us.

A prisoner
Gatesville, Texas

Nicaragua analysis

The *Militant's* coverage and analysis of the Nicaraguan elections was good, and I agree with it — up to a point.

I do not agree that the election announced the defeat of the Nicaraguan revolution — a defeat for the revolution, perhaps; but the revolution is still alive. Its gains, badly eroded by the embargo and the contra war, will be defended by the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN), still the strongest, best organized party in Nicaragua.

The FSLN had made mistakes,

serious ones; had lost touch with its base; had made too many concessions in its efforts to end U.S. aggression.

But the people of Nicaragua were voting for survival. The United States was saying: If you elect UNO, the embargo will be lifted; otherwise, the economic war will go on.

The solidarity movement made its share of mistakes: a reliance on legislative pressure and not focusing more action on the embargo.

The FSLN and the people of Nicaragua are analyzing the results of the elections. We must do the same thing and the *Militant's* analysis can contribute. Meanwhile, the revolution has been set back, but not defeated.

Lois Remple
Pueblo, Colorado

New England strike

On January 9 International Union of Electronic Workers (IUE) Local 239, which represents workers at five ADT Co. locations in New England, went on strike after negotiations broke down.

It was obvious after five weeks of picketing and the ADT refusal to meet on three separate occasions that a union-busting tactic was being played out. The issues that led to the strike were company proposals to have overtime handed out at management discretion, to lay off without going through seniority, to hire subcontractors without any limitations, and to have the workers pay more for medical benefits.

Some people have gone back to work for reasons ranging from fear of losing one's job to economic stress. It's hard to feel bad or sorry for people who have no concept of what was established for the Eastern strikers.

There is no prospect that there will be a settlement in the near future, which makes it even more important we all help as much as we can. Your contributions can be sent to IUE Local 239, c/o President William Wilder, 20 Brookdale St., Roslindale, Mass. 02131. For more

information, please call (800) 427-2755.

William Wilder
Roslindale, Massachusetts

Palestine detention

We want to let your readers know about the arrest of well-known Palestinian labor leader Hani Beydoun on March 20. He was detained at an Israeli army check point in Ramallah, in the West Bank, and his life is in danger.

Beydoun recently completed a successful speaking tour in the United States. Now the Israeli government would like to silence him.

In the past your telegrams have forced the Israeli government to stop torturing and to release Palestinian fighters. Please participate in the international telegram campaign to the prime minister of Israel calling for Beydoun's release. Call Western Union at (800) 257-4900, operator 9664.

Palestine Solidarity Committee
Committee to Release
Hani Beydoun
P.O. Box 29340
Chicago, Illinois 60629

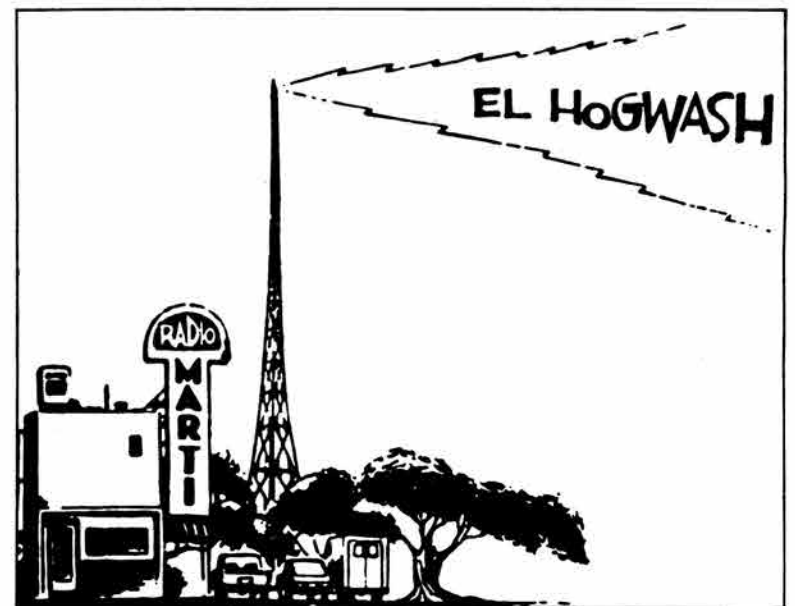
Safety on the docks

It was with more than usual interest that I read in the March 16 issue "Detroit GM workers protest safety hazards."

In 1947 Auckland waterside workers were locked out. The ship was the *Mountpark*; the issue, safety.

After some months the government decided that the case should be heard in Supreme Court. It took 11 days.

As national president, I took the case for the New Zealand Waterside Workers' Union. The government, ship owners, and Waterfront Control Commission combined against us, assisted by a battery of three barristers. To their consternation and that of a host of our critics, the chief justice found for my union. The essence of his lengthy judgment was: Even though experts declare a method of work to be safe, if workers genuinely believe their lives or



Don Wright
The launching of Washington's Radio Martí was captured by this 1985 cartoon. Today U.S. aggression against Cuba continues with the attempts to broadcast TV Martí on Cuban domestic frequencies.

safety to be in jeopardy, they are entitled to refuse to work.

In addition we were awarded substantial damages.

I trust this may be of some value not only to my Detroit fellow workers but also any others facing similar problems.

Yours in solidarity.
Jock Barnes
Auckland, New Zealand

Drug testing

It was with personal interest that I read the "Union Talk" column on drug testing of rail workers in the March 2 *Militant*.

I work as a tower operator for the Southeastern Transportation Authority (SEPTA) in Philadelphia. At the beginning of the year, SEPTA instituted "random" drug testing.

Recently I was called to replace a coworker who was pulled out of service for a minor infraction. There was no accident or injury involved. He was taken for a drug test.

While the results normally come back in three days, he was out of work for a week because the clinic "lost" his sample. Needless to say,

he wasn't compensated for their mess-up.

Workers immediately raise the question: If they can "lose" a sample, can't they "inadvertently" switch samples and put you out of work with a "drug-related" firing on your record.

I was told that the Conrail "family" has a new policy for crews returning to work, with a sign-up time and interview time so "Dad" can determine if you're fit and sober.

These measures, combined with the drive to outlaw a woman's right to choose abortion, graphically display the employers' determination to control our personal lives. It's crucial that our unions do more to fight these undemocratic threats.

Craig McKissic
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

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.

Correction

In a March 30 article on the death of Ron Wolin, we reported incorrectly that the court decision he won, *Wolin v. Port Authority*, "was extended to virtually all transportation terminals and shopping centers."

The issue of exercising First Amendment rights in shopping centers was dealt with later by the Supreme Court, which held that shopping centers are private property, subject to state laws and constitutional provisos. Consequently, the right to leaflet and carry out other such activities in shopping centers varies from state to state.

Sweden auto workers mount fight

Saab-Scania sues 982 unionists

BY BIRGITTA ISACSSON
AND ERIK DAHLROTH

STOCKHOLM, Sweden — The last few months in Sweden have been marked by a government crisis over how to cope with growing economic difficulties and an upsurge in strikes as working people have responded to government-proposed measures.

Beginning in February a wave of strikes and protests by public service employees, bus drivers, bank employees, and hospital workers swept the country in response to a government-announced austerity package.

The plan called for an end to wage increases, a ban on strikes, increased fines against individuals for illegal strikes, and an automatic extension of all contract agreements between unions and employers. To sweeten the proposal the government promised to freeze prices and rents.

The whole package, however, was met with a torrent of protests.

Social Democratic Prime Minister Ingvar Carlsson and his cabinet resigned February 15 after the belt-tightening measures were rejected by every other party in the Swedish parliament.

Carlsson has now resurfaced heading a new Social Democratic government and is preparing another austerity package in an attempt to head off an impending economic crisis signaled by rising interest rates, inflation heading toward 8 percent this year, and a decline in economic growth and investment.

Saab-Scania

One of the industries hit was auto as union members at the big Saab-Scania plant outside Stockholm mounted a fight against the company that continues to escalate.

In Sweden 90 percent of industrial workers are members of trade unions, along with 80 percent of service and office workers. Renegotiation clauses in existing union contracts are being opened due to the economic crisis to demand wage raises in order to keep up with inflation. On March 30 government-appointed mediators proposed that the

Hawaii hotel workers approve 5-year pact, end month-long strike

BY MARC VIGLIELMO

HONOLULU, Hawaii — Members of Local 5 of the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees returned to work after a tentative agreement was reached with the Council of Hawaii Hotels on March 24. The month-long strike by 7,500 housekeepers, bellhops, clerks, and restaurant and bar workers involved one-fourth of the hotel rooms in Waikiki and one-seventh statewide.

The five-year pact includes pay increases of 7 percent in the first year and 6 percent each year for four years for workers who receive no tips. Tipped workers will receive increases of 2 percent to 3 percent. These increases fulfill the main goal of the union, according to spokesman Roderick Rodriguez, bringing pay in line with that of hotel workers on the mainland.

Workers held a series of rallies during the strike and won support from other unions, including the Hawaii Government Employees' Association, Service Employees International Union Local 368, United Food and Commercial Workers Union Local 480, and the teachers' union. At a March 17 rally of 400 workers in Honolulu's Kapiolani Park, representatives of these unions were joined by other labor officials, including a representative of the Coalition of Labor Union Women, and by representatives of the Rainbow Coalition and the Latin American and Caribbean Solidarity Association.

employers' association and union not open the renegotiation clause.

Some 5,300 workers at the Scania truck plant located in the town of Södertälje just south of here are organized by the 500,000-strong Metal Workers Union. It is one of the largest workplaces in the country.

The union local at the plant has been trying to open negotiations on wage increases with the company since the end of 1989. Some 3,500 signed petitions in early February that were delivered to the Saab-Scania bosses demanding a 5.50 kronor an hour raise (US\$1=6.20 kronor). The company responded with delays and eventually refused to answer the workers' demands.

Fifty Scania workers in the foundry staged a one-hour sit-in February 16 after which the company proposed a 2.50 kronor increase. At a union meeting following the action the company's wage raise proposal was rejected unanimously.

Meanwhile, union contracts were signed at other Saab-Scania plants in Malmö and Trollhättan with workers there receiving a more substantial wage hike. The union members at Södertälje then demanded the local union hold meetings around the truck factory to discuss how to proceed. In light of the other contracts signed, the company's low proposal for Södertälje angered workers and on February 23 workers in the transmission shop downed their tools for three hours.

The following day the company boosted its offer to 3.40 kronor. The job actions had won an increase, which the workers considered a victory. But everyone knew the Scania truck division took in a profit of \$580 million in 1989.

Marches begin

Beginning February 27 workers in the plant began to hold a series of marches throughout the facility and ending in front of the head office.

The first march drew 300 workers and grew along the way. The unionists chanted, "We want 5.50!" Outside the head office a Saab-Scania boss told the workers that he could not talk to everyone and suggested they elect a delegation, which he then would invite into his office.

"Don't try to split us!" workers responded, "all we want is 5.50!"

In the following several days workers continued to march.

On March 5, in the biggest march the plant was all but shut down.

In Sweden when the local union refuses to accept the company offer and no contract is signed, negotiations are then in the hands of the national union. The legal possibilities for



Auto workers at Saab-Scania plant (above) outside Stockholm are fighting for higher pay, despite government demands for "austerity." Strikes, other protests by workers, and Sweden's mounting economic difficulties are causing a crisis for the Social Democratic government.

a local union in Sweden to strike are very limited. Permission must be obtained from the national union body and the national union federation, and workers can't strike if they already have a national pact. Individual workers who strike can be taken to labor court and fined. Part of the government's austerity plan was a proposed increase in the strike fines from \$32 to \$800.

The union meeting held March 7 was the largest in the local's history. More than 1,200 workers attended, wanting to know where the negotiations stood. The national negotiator Bernt Ståhl informed the workers the company had not given in and no contract was signed.

At the meeting Scania workers received greetings from unionists supporting their demands. Big backing came from workers in other Metal Workers Union locals whose bosses would not sign contracts until the Scania negotiations were resolved. "We should be proud of what we accomplished," said one Scania worker in the discussion. The worker referred to the fact that under pressure the national union officials had refused to sign the contract. When the government announced the austerity plan the national unions backed it, but many were later forced to withdraw their support.

Another mentioned the workers on strike at Eastern Airlines in North America, noting

how long and hard they have fought. The workers decided to meet again in a week.

Negotiations dragged on. At a March 13 meeting, union official Björn Svallfors reported the company had been shaken by the actions and was considering a new proposal. Workers decided that it was crucial to keep up a fighting spirit and called a demonstration for March 17.

One thousand people turned out for the demonstration and the crowd marched through the city of Södertälje carrying hand-lettered placards. A worker from a nearby metal factory addressed the crowd solidifying with their fight.

Company sues

From the first day of protests at the Scania plant the company has threatened to take workers to labor court. The week before the demonstration the bosses announced 982 workers will be sued. The first court proceedings are slated for April 25. Along with keeping up the fight in the plant for their demands, workers are enthusiastic about having a show of force at the court proceedings and have lined up Volvo buses to travel to the hearings in Stockholm.

Birgitta Isacsson and Erik Dahlroth both work at the Scania plant in Södertälje and are members of the Metal Workers Union.

Pathfinder bookstore opens in Sweden

BY INGE HINNEMO

STOCKHOLM, Sweden — Close to 90 people, hailing from 16 countries, crowded into the Pathfinder bookstore here March 31 to celebrate its official opening.

Introducing the rally on behalf of the bookstore, Barbro Davidsson pointed out that it was not a commercial enterprise but a weapon for the struggle of all working people.

"Constructing the bookstore was a true international effort," Davidsson continued. "It lasted many months and involved volunteers from more than half a dozen countries."

Located in central Stockholm close to subway and train stations, the bookstore has an attractive storefront and features rolling book racks that permit its transformation into a meeting hall.

Already, more than 300 titles are available on its shelves. Most are in English and Swedish, but many are in Spanish and other languages spoken by immigrant workers in Sweden.

The newest work on display is a Swedish translation of *An Action Program to Confront the Coming Economic Crisis*, Pathfinder's second publication in that language.

Bizo Mngqikana, who brought greetings from the African National Congress office in Stockholm, warned of the campaigns of "disinformation" directed against the Cuban and South African peoples. "Pathfinder is one of the avenues that exist to get our message across to the world," he explained.

For Dennys Guzmán Pérez, the ambassador of Cuba to Sweden, the meeting reaffirmed that it was not only the Cubans who still believed in "the bright hope of socialism."

"That is why it is so important that this bookstore exists, one where you can find all these ideas — from Marx to Fidel Castro," Guzmán added.

John Riddell, editor of the Pathfinder series *The Communist International in Lenin's Time*, recalled to the rally how workers in

Sweden helped prepare the ground for the launching of the Communist International in 1919.

"A similar process is beginning in Sweden today," said Riddell. "Pathfinder's friends and supporters and all of you here tonight will be caught up in a great international struggle for freedom, for socialism. The founding of the Pathfinder center here is a small but important step along this road."

The evening's final speaker was Maria Hamberg, a leader of the Communist League of Sweden. "It is we — all of us here — who are the Pathfinder bookstore," she said. "We will use it — use the Pathfinder books, the *Militant* newspaper and *Militant Labor Forums* — in order to understand and become part of the struggle."

A worker in the Saab-Scania auto factory took up a collection on behalf of the 1,000 workers there facing prosecution.

In addition, 3,000 kronor (US\$500) was raised toward bookstore construction costs.