

THE MILITANT

INSIDE
Socialists launch 'Militant,'
'PM' subscription drive

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Cincinnati actions protest cop killing of Black youth

BY VAL LIBBY
AND EVA BRAIMAN

CINCINNATI—Several days of protests of up to 1,000 people, including a mass outpouring in the city council chambers, condemned the cop killing of 19-year-old Timothy Thomas, the fourth Black person killed by the city's police since November and the 15th since 1995. Police shot at protesters with rubber bullets, metal-filled beanbags, and tear gas, and made 66 arrests. Some 25 people were hospitalized, some struck by the police ammunition.

In the early hours of April 7, Thomas was shot and killed by Cincinnati cop Stephen Roach. Thomas, who had left home to buy cigarettes, was, according to police, "spotted" by two off duty cops and recognized as someone wanted by police for failure to appear in court 14 times, all on misdemeanor charges, 12 of which were traffic related, including failure to wear a seat belt.

Roach, one of 12 officers and supervisors to respond to the alert, chased down Thomas, who was unarmed, and shot him once in the chest behind an abandoned building. Since the murder, Cincinnati police have refused to release details of the shooting although a videotape of the incident was taken from a police cruiser.

Hundreds of outraged community residents converged on a Cincinnati City Council Law and Public Safety committee meeting April 9, demanding an explanation and accusing the city of covering up the facts. Timothy Thomas's mother, Angela Leisure spoke. "You took part of my life from me. And I demand to know why! They keep asking me why did my son run," she said. "If you are an African male, you will run."

After over three hours, with city officials and the chief of police refusing to answer questions, the crowd left, taking their protest to District One police headquarters.

The diverse crowd swelled to 1,000 people demanding, "Stop the killing," and chanting "No Justice, No Peace." A smaller group was later broken up by the cops using tear gas and beanbag bullets. As a helicopter aimed its high-beams through the tear-gas choked sky, police in riot gear pa-

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Glenn Hartong/Cincinnati Enquirer
Angry crowd jams city council chambers April 9 in Cincinnati in response to killing of Timothy Thomas, the fourth Black man slain by city police since November. Cops fired rubber bullets and tear gas at demonstration in the city.

Cuban youth speak to workers, students in New England

BY BROCK SATTER

BOSTON—Cuban youth leaders Yanelis Martínez and Javier Dueñas spoke to workers and students across New England April 2-7 as part of a three-week tour that included speaking engagements on college campuses in Illinois and Minnesota.

A number of students who participated in the meetings at the University of Hartford in Connecticut and Bridgewater State College in Massachusetts are interested in taking part in a July 22-30 Cuba-U.S. Youth Exchange being hosted by the Union of Young Communists (UJC), the Federation

of University Students (FEU), and other Cuban youth organizations in Havana.

Students at both colleges are holding follow-up meetings to organize to attend. The youth exchange is being promoted as a way to overcome the barriers imposed by Washington's travel ban and embargo against Cuba, so young workers and students in the United States can learn about the revolution, and youth in the Caribbean country can gain an understanding of life under capitalism in the United States.

Martínez, 23, is a fifth-year law student

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Meatpacking workers win wage hike at Illinois plant

BY ARRIN HAWKINS
AND JOEL BRITTON

CHICAGO—Meat packers at Hormel-owned Rochelle Foods in Rochelle, Illinois, are returning to work after a three-week strike that forced the company to increase wages by \$1.40 per hour over a five-year contract.

On April 8 some 600 striking members of United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 1540 voted to ratify the most recent contract proposal. The workers accepted the new offer by a 99 percent majority, according to the *Rochelle News-Leader*.

The wage increases will be 40 cents the first year, 30 cents the second year, 20 cents the third year, and 25 cents for each of the remaining two years. By the end of the contract, wages will be at \$11.55 an hour.

As of April 4, reports the *News-Leader*, "an end to the strike looked remote. In a Rochelle Foods press release from that day, Plant Manager Cal Jacobs said the company would be standing behind the previous offer of 85 cents over four years." This was only a token increase over the 70 cents an hour over four years offered in February when the previous contract expired, an offer that was rejected by the workers.

Many said the company's original wage increases would be canceled out by increased deductions for health benefits. Rochelle Foods is a hog slaughtering and processing plant that employs 870 workers.

In the days leading up to the settlement, 26 UFCW locals in the United States and Canada sent \$125,000 in donations, and Rochelle strikers were working with locals

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INS, cops raid poultry plant in Pennsylvania

BY CHRIS REMPLE

MIFFLINTOWN, Pennsylvania—Nearly 60 federal and state cops raided the Empire Kosher Poultry plant here April 4. They arrested 135 workers, charging them with being in the country illegally. The plant is organized by United Food and Commercial Workers Local 1776.

With 1,200 workers, Empire is the largest kosher poultry plant in the country. During the raid, the cops sealed the plant to control all entries and exits. As one worker stated, "It was terrifying. They herded us into the cafeteria like animals. We'd never been through anything like that." She spoke in defense of the undocumented workers, saying, "A person has to work."

There were 45 cops from the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), 12 Pennsylvania state police, the Juniata County Sheriff along with two deputies, and two agents of the Social Security Administration involved in the raid. Those rounded up were taken to the York County prison.

Wendell Young III, president of the UFCW local, said in a phone interview the raid was "horrendous. The whole way the raid was handled, with SWAT teams, was

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Spy plane conflict highlights U.S. rulers' military threat to Chinese workers state

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS
AND GREG MCCARTAN

The collision of a Chinese fighter jet with a U.S. spy plane flying provocatively close to the border of China highlights Washington's massive military arsenal aimed at the people of the world's most populated country. The political events around this incident and the 11-day stand-off point to the irreconcilable class antagonisms between the U.S. imperialist rulers and the workers and farmers in China and Korea, two countries where mighty social revolutions overturned capitalism.

Although the crew of the plane has been released and returned to the United States, Washington only "acknowledged [the Chinese] government's intention to raise U.S. reconnaissance missions near China" in a meeting slated between officials of the two countries for April 18. This was stated in a letter to the Chinese minister of foreign af-

fairs from U.S. ambassador Joseph Prueher, released by the White House April 11.

The letter said both "President Bush and Secretary of State Powell have expressed their sincere regret over your missing pilot and aircraft"; stated the "severely crippled [U.S.] aircraft made an emergency landing after following international emergency procedures"; and said the U.S. government was "sorry the entering of China's airspace and the landing did not have verbal clearance."

The spy flight, of which there have been a growing number over the past several years, was involved in monitoring electronic signals, including radar and communications, so Washington would have as full a picture as possible of China's military capabilities and operating practices should a conflict break out. Most of the 200 or so U.S. flights around China come from the U.S. airbase in Okinawa, Japan.

A constellation of U.S. spy satellites over

China also carry out eavesdropping on telephone and radio conversations and other electronic communications. "If you know a lot about their air defenses, for example if it ever comes to a scrap,"—the U.S. military's euphemism for war—"you can see them, jam them, and stop them," said retired Rear Adm. Eric McVadon, a former defense attaché in Beijing who flew spy planes along the Chinese coast in the early 1960s.

"Cautiously but steadily, the Pentagon is looking at Asia as the most likely arena for future military conflict," wrote *Washington Post* correspondent Thomas Ricks. He remarked that the U.S. government has assigned more attack submarines to the Pacific, "more war games and strategic studies centered on Asia" with "more diplomacy aimed at reconfiguring the U.S. military presence in the area."

Each plane in the U.S. Navy's fleet of 12

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Use of prison labor grows with rising prison population

BY MAGGIE TROWE

Nearly 2 million people were locked up in federal, state, and local prisons in the United States as of June 2000, a record number, and a 3 percent increase over June 1999. This is the biggest incarceration of civilians in history. The United States, with 5 percent of the world's population, has 25 percent of its prisoners.

The sharp increase in the number of working people behind bars, up 1 million since 1994, is a result of the bipartisan assault spearheaded by the federal government over the last two decades to put more police on

The United States, with 5 percent of the world's population, has 25 percent of its prisoners.

the streets, impose longer prison terms, and widen the use of mandatory sentencing, particularly for drug offenses.

Workers who are Black and male were incarcerated in record numbers last year in the United States, with a total of 791,600 Black males behind bars, or 40 percent of the total prison population. Blacks make up 12 percent of the population as a whole. Nearly one in eight Black males age 20 to 34 were in prison on any given day, according to a Justice Department report.

Black youth in the United States are six times more likely to be put in prison than white youth. The recent case in Florida of 14-year-old Lionel Tate, convicted of first-degree murder for causing the death of a six-year-old playmate when he was 12 and sentenced to life in prison without parole, highlights the growing number of states that have expanded their laws to punish juveniles as adults for a variety of offenses.

Last year in Louisiana state officials, facing several lawsuits, agreed to stop placing

any more convicted juvenile offenders in privately run "youth prisons." The lawsuits charged that administrators in these prisons, run by the Wackenhut Corrections Corporation, the world's largest operator of for-profit prisons, had deprived teenage inmates of food, clothing, and medical care, and that guards had routinely beaten the youth.

Wackenhut Corrections manages 55 correctional/detention facilities in North America, Europe, Australia, South Africa, and New Zealand, with a total of 40,000 beds. The company's annual revenues in 2000 were \$535.6 million, up 22 percent from 1999. Its net income, however, declined to \$17 million from \$21.9 million the previous year due in part to the "deactivation" of the Jena, Louisiana, youth prison, where abusive conditions had sparked the lawsuits.

In a recent report on abuse of female inmates, an Amnesty International report noted that only three states prohibit male guards from conducting "pat-down" searches of female inmates. In addition, some states consider only some types of sexual assault of women in prison to be criminal, while others apply laws only to corrections officers and not to kitchen staff or medical workers. In New York State, a dozen state prison guards have been charged with sexual offenses in 1999 and 2000.

Earlier this month the U.S. Bureau of Prisons launched a new policy limiting inmates of federal prisons to 300 minutes of telephone calls per month, an average of 10 minutes a day. Previously only collect calls were limited. The federal prisons recently installed a new telephone system allowing the use of debit accounts paid for by the prisoners. Prison authorities require the inmates to use punch codes to keep track of calls and billing. Prisoners may call up to 30 phone numbers, which must be pre-approved. All telephone calls in the 98 U.S. federal prisons are routinely monitored or recorded. Prisoner advocate groups are protesting the move.



Women assembling computer components at the Central California Women's Facility. Use of workers serving prison terms as a source of cheap labor is on the rise and some U.S. manufacturers are pressing to broaden the practice.

Use of workers serving prison terms as a source of cheap labor is on the rise and some U.S. manufacturers are pressing to broaden the practice.

Last year 80,000 prisoners were working for wages, both in private enterprises and in state-run operations. Over the past 20 years some 30 states have passed laws allowing the use of convict labor by private companies. Prisoners are being employed at low wages—from 25 cents to \$7 an hour—to book airline tickets, pack and ship computer software, and stock toys, in addition to doing traditional in-prison work, such as making license plates.

The *Christian Science Monitor* noted that bosses "who employ convicts also save bundles in health insurance, unemployment insurance, payroll and Social Security taxes, workers compensation, and vacation time."

Jack Cleveland of Server Technologies, a computer company that employs prisoners at the Central California Women's Facility to make computer components, said prison labor "has been a fabulous success for us.... The work force can expand and contract to our needs...which saves us a lot." Under the California program the prisoners supposedly earn \$5.75 an hour, which is taken by the state and allocated to pay for room and board costs that the prisoner "owes" and other expenses, after which the remainder, if any, goes to a bank account for the prisoner.

Large profits from this exploitation have stimulated the boom in the construction of private prisons. The "corrections industry" capitalists can not only make profits by jailing the workers, but by using their labor power at a bargain price.

In Michigan, Bill Martin, the director of the Department of Corrections, recently praised a proposal by business leaders in Jackson, Michigan, to permit the creation of a "manufacturing condominium" on prison land as a prisoner-exploitation zone for private industry. There are 39 other such operations in the country. Current Michigan law permits prison work only in industries owned and operated by the prison, which sell the goods or services produced

to state governments and nonprofit organizations.

Under the new proposal, the *Jackson Citizen Patriot* reports, prisoners in most cases would perform "work that is labor-intensive and difficult to find other workers [for] because of the region's tight labor market." Workers behind bars would be paid "market wages," the article continued, which "would be subject to guidelines established by public policy, including paying back room and board costs," estimated at about \$18,000 a year. A worker earning minimum wage has an annual gross income of less than \$12,000.

'An exciting proposal' for business

Such programs are touted by business officials as the way workers behind bars can supposedly learn skills. "It's an exciting proposal," said Martin. "It would move us into a new level of opportunity and I think, more than anything, it would help prepare inmates for release into society, while at the same time producing something of value for the community."

The National Center for Policy Analysis, a right-wing think tank, published a report in its on-line magazine titled "Creating Factories Behind Bars." The piece, written by Knut Rostad, president of the Enterprise Prison Institute, and Morgan Reynolds, director of the Criminal Justice Center at the National Center for Policy Analysis, urges the Bush administration to take measures "alleviating the 93 percent unemployment rate behind the gates of American prisons and a workforce shortage that threatens American competitiveness." They motivate the effort as a way of lowering the rate of recidivism, the return to prison of many incarcerated workers after their release.

Complaining about the high wages paid to "offshore" capitalist operations in other countries and the "dearth of skilled, motivated, and reliable workers with an aptitude for math and a sense of teamwork," Reynolds and Rostad counterpose "what might be called an 'InPrison' operation" that "can provide an excellent, cost-effective domestic alternative."

THE MILITANT

'Return our lands'

More than 5 million Palestinian refugees have been forcefully driven out of their homes by the Israeli state. Read and learn why working people around the world should support the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and of the refugees to return to their homeland.



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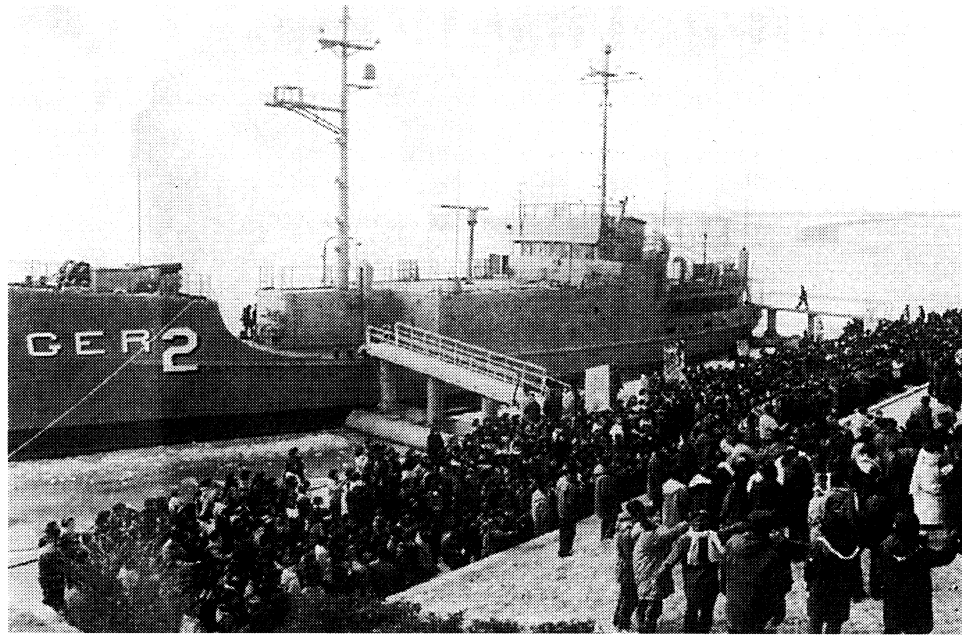
U.S. weapons target China and north Korea

The following message was sent April 10 by Socialist Workers Party national secretary Jack Barnes to Kim Jong Il, general secretary of the Workers Party of Korea.

The Socialist Workers Party sends revolutionary greetings to the Workers Party of Korea on the occasion of the April 15 national celebration of the Korean people. We salute the Korean people's determined struggle to reunify your nation, free from imperialist presence or influence. We join with others around the world in calling for the unconditional removal of all U.S. troops and weapons from the Korean peninsula.

Washington's current propaganda barrage over a U.S. spy plane damaged while operating provocatively close to China's borders highlights the U.S. government's maintenance of a massive concentration of military forces, including a nuclear arsenal, in Asia and the Pacific. These weapons are targeted at the working people of China and Korea.

In April 1969 the government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) shot down a manned U.S. spy plane, forcing the U.S. government to back off for some years from its most provocative frequent probes against both Korea and China. The previous year, after issuing warnings to Washington for weeks to withdraw the spy ship *USS Pueblo* from waters off your shores, the DPRK apprehended the Navy vessel and stood firm in face of U.S. military threats. Your action won support from millions of toilers the world over, including those in Vietnam who were under murderous assault by



Pyongyang Times

U.S. spy ship *Pueblo*, above, apprehended in 1968 by north Korean navy after weeks of warning by the government in Pyongyang. The ship is docked in the country's capital as floating monument to determination of Korea people to resist Washington's imperial arrogance. Photo was taken during visit to the captured vessel by Rolando Alfonso Borges, a member of the Central Committee of the Cuban Communist Party.

U.S. imperialism at that time. The *Pueblo*, still docked in Pyongyang to this day, is a floating monument to the resolve of revolutionary people throughout the world in face of Washington's imperial arrogance and saber rattling.

If the U.S. rulers had learned a lesson from assertions of national dignity and sov-

ereignty such as these, Washington would not today confront the situation it does over a spy plane on Hainan Island. To have done so, however, would run counter to the U.S. rulers' determination to aggressively advance their class interests throughout Asia and the Pacific. The large-scale military exercises now being planned by Washing-

Conflict highlights U.S. threats to China

Continued from front page

EP-3 spy planes flew one mission on average every other day, 365 days a year, according to William Arkin, a former U.S. army intelligence analyst. Spy flights targeting north Korea, Arkin says, were averaging 150 a month at the end of 2000. The government of north Korea has protested these probes for decades. In 1969 the north Korean military shot down a Navy EC-121 spy plane, forcing then-president Richard Nixon to suspend manned flights even while escalating the imperialist war against the people of Vietnam. The previous year the government in Pyongyang, following several weeks of warnings to Washington, captured the U.S. spy ship *Pueblo* and held the 82-member crew hostage for 11 months (see letter from Jack Barnes above).

Arkin notes that "electronic intelligence gathering has become such an intrinsic part of the American way of warfare, it would be deceitful not to admit that these flights have a provocative purpose behind them, either in actively seeking to stimulate Chinese air defenses or in 'mapping' China's networks for destruction in prospective war plans."

Incidents like the April 1 collision or more serious clashes will recur—posing the threat of military confrontation and possible war—as long as the policy of U.S. imperialism continues to be one of deployment of an enormous military force, provocations, and long-term war threats. This is the central question for working people in China and the United States, one not resolved—or even openly discussed by officials from either country—by the outcome of the latest dispute.

U.S. forces poised in the Pacific

The U.S. Pacific Command has some 300,000 military personnel under arms. This includes 47,000 U.S. troops ashore in Japan and another 12,000 soldiers on ships in Japanese waters. Washington has 37,000 GIs based in south Korea and an arsenal of 1,500 strike aircraft, 1,000 rotary aircraft, 5,000 tracked vehicles, 3,000 tanks, and 250 combat ships with four or more carrier battle groups.

Nuclear forces include eight strategic submarines based at Bangor in Washington State, which carry 1,536 nuclear warheads, each with an explosive yield of 100 kilotons, or eight times that of the bomb dropped by Washington on the Japanese city of Hiroshima. Earmarked for use in the Pacific on attack submarines are another 120 nuclear-tipped Tomahawk cruise missiles and an unknown number of air-launched cruise missiles for use on long-range bombers.

The U.S. government does not release information on the targeting of its land-

based intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), which are fitted with 2,150 nuclear warheads, according to the U.S. State Department. Washington has a total of 7,295 nuclear warheads for deployment on ICBMs, submarines, or heavy bombers.

The U.S. government maintains a Single Integrated Operation Plan containing a range of nuclear attack options and specific targets to be destroyed in Russia, China, and a number of countries it calls "rogue states," such as Iran, Iraq, Libya, north Korea, and Syria, according to Hans Kristensen, of the Nautilus Institute. It does not disclose these plans publicly, even to U.S. Congressmen. For example, Senator Robert Kerrey issued a statement last December, complaining in a letter to then-defense secretary William Cohen that "for some time I have been asking for details of the [nuclear weapons] targeting plan but I have been told on every occasion that I am not entitled to know."

Arming Taiwan

Washington's military encirclement of China also includes tentative plans to arm Taiwan with destroyers equipped with an antimissile system that could become part of the U.S.-designed "theater missile defense." The broader missile defense plan would be for the United States a "precursor to an American first-strike" capability, former secretary of state Henry Kissinger bluntly admitted at a recent conference with government officials in Europe.

The government of Taiwan is also reportedly requesting submarine-hunting planes and diesel-powered submarines from the U.S. government to add to its already formidable arsenal of advanced equipment. The Chinese people consider Taiwan a part of their country and moves by Washington to deploy this weaponry there would escalate tensions in the region.

Two days after the collision between the U.S. and Chinese aircraft, an F-16 fighter jet from Taiwan successfully launched a Harpoon antiship missile during a joint naval and air force exercise, London's *Financial Times* reported. The Japanese news agency Kyodo quoted military officials in Taiwan declaring this development would significantly expand their Air Force's capability to attack Chinese warships.

Washington has also begun to integrate the Singaporean military and the armed forces in the Philippines into its military plans. The government of Singapore is building a special pier to meet docking requirements of nuclear-powered U.S. aircraft carrier. Last year the Singapore's troops participated for the first time in "Cobra Gold," the annual U.S.-Thailand military

maneuvers. Also last year U.S. forces and those from the Philippines conducted their first joint exercise in years. According to the *Washington Post*, "U.S. forces will conduct frequent exercises to train Americans and Filipinos to operate together in...full-scale combat."

Why Washington targets China, Korea

The events of the past week underscore the long-term drive by U.S. imperialism to reverse the gains of the 1949 Chinese revolution, in which the country's workers and peasants overthrew the landlord-capitalist regime and began expropriating the emerging capitalist class in industry and agriculture. To the shock of the wealthy ruling class in the United States, China, which was to be the big prize of the victorious imperialist power coming out of World War II, was suddenly ripped out of the world imperialist system of exploitation by millions of working people.

Through revolutionary mobilizations and pressure from the toilers the Chinese government eliminated imperialist pillage, nationalized property relations, established a state monopoly of foreign trade, and began implementing a degree of economic planning. Despite the bureaucratic caste that dominated the country—with all the distortions from forced collectivization of agriculture and bureaucratic methods of economic planning and management of industry—the conquests of the socialist revolution advanced China as a modern nation.

The social gains of the revolution are striking when comparing China with India, two countries that are similar in many ways, including size—1.2 billion in China, 1 billion in India. Both countries have also experienced centuries of colonial domination and superexploitation. However, India's infant mortality rate at 64.9 deaths per 1,000 live births is more than double that of China, which is 28.9 per 1,000 live births. Life expectancy at birth in India is 62.5 years, in China 71.4 years. Literacy in China is 81.5 percent, in India 52 percent.

Because of the socialist revolution in China workers and peasants have a different view of themselves, their right to job, health care, and other social rights than the toilers in semicolonial countries like India. This is what the U.S. rulers will confront in attempting to overthrow the nationalized economy, restore a capitalist regime, eliminate the foreign trade monopoly, and open up China as a market and field of investments. They have less illusions that anything short of military force and war will ultimately be needed to transform the country

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ton and the government in Seoul are aimed at legitimizing the permanent military presence of U.S. imperialism in the region.

The U.S. ruling families have remained implacably hostile to the workers and farmers of Korea because you overturned capitalist rule, liberated the northern part of your nation on the road to national reunification, and have continued to stand up to imperialist aggression and threats for the past half century. Washington and Tokyo consider this to be a dangerous example to working people worldwide. The U.S. rulers also remain determined to reverse the historic conquests of the Chinese revolution.

This is why both the Clinton and Bush administrations have charted a course to deploy an antimissile system that would target Korea, China, and any other people in the world whose actions are not to the U.S. rulers' liking. It is for the same reason that the U.S. government maintains 37,000 heavily armed troops in Korea enforcing its partition, against the will of millions throughout the peninsula. The Clinton administration ended talks with the government of the DPRK three months before leaving office, and President George Bush continues this freeze.

Class-conscious working people in the United States are heartened by the workers in the south of Korea who have taken to the streets against the threatened layoffs resulting from Seoul's economic "restructuring" plans. Working people in other countries around the world, from dockworkers in Brazil defending their union rights to striking workers in Indonesia, are standing up to the brutal effects of the same imperialist oppression.

In the United States, working people are resisting the assault on our rights and conditions of life and work, from striking garment workers in Los Angeles to meat packers speaking out against large-scale factory raids by the federal immigration police from Pennsylvania to Nebraska to Minnesota. The stagnation of the growth of the world capitalist economy, from the decade-long decline in Japan to the current downturn in the United States, is leading to both increased "shocks" and further pressure by the employers on working people's jobs and working conditions, and will be met with resistance by workers and farmers and by militant youth attracted to them. These struggles internationally reinforce the fight by the Korean people for the unification of your country.

The Socialist Workers Party pledges to tell the truth to fellow workers, farmers, and youth about the Korean people's battle to get Washington, Tokyo, and other imperialist powers off your backs. We demand:

End all U.S. spy flights, naval probes and "joint" exercises, and other provocations in the Pacific and Asia!

U.S. troops and nuclear weapons out of Korea!

Normalize relations now with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea!

Comradely,
Jack Barnes
National Secretary

FROM PATHFINDER

Capitalism's World Disorder

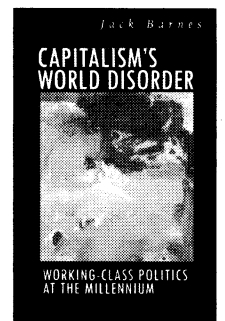
Working-Class Politics at the Millennium

JACK BARNES

The social devastation, financial panics, political turmoil, police brutality, and military assaults

accelerating all around us are the inevitable forces unleashed by capitalism. But the future capitalism has in store for us can be changed by the timely solidarity, courageous action, and united struggle of workers and farmers conscious of their power to transform the world. Also available in French and Spanish. \$23.95

Available from bookstores listed on page 12.



YS in Sweden helps distribute Pathfinder books

BY BJÖRN TIRSEN

STOCKHOLM, Sweden—The Young Socialists have been holding a number of activities and joining protest actions here over the past several months. We have placed a priority on getting Pathfinder books and the *Militant* into people's hands as one of the best ways to introduce them to socialism and to present a working-class perspective on political developments. This helps to distinguish the revolutionary perspectives of the YS from radical organizations who hope to attract youth to their political perspectives.

A number of petty bourgeois socialist and traditional "left" groups held a demonstration of 1,000 people March 24 during a European Union (EU) summit here. The action protested Sweden's participation in the EU as well as the Schengen agreement, an anti-immigrant policing measure aimed at making it harder for people from non-European states to enter the EU zone.

Even though we did not support the action, we decided to set up literature tables in order to talk to workers and youth who might be interested in revolutionary politics. Our table drew a lot of interest and we sold 10 *Militants* and one *Perspectiva Mundial* along with more than 2,000 kronor (US\$200) in Pathfinder books that day. The most popular titles were the Swedish edition of *Socialism and Man in Cuba* by Ernesto Che Guevara and *Is Biology*

Woman's Destiny? by Evelyn Reed. The interest in feminist literature was high: we sold four titles on the struggle for women's liberation, including *Woman's Evolution* by Evelyn Reed.

During the summit the government had the police cut off many parts of Stockholm so the top politicians could travel from their hotel to the meeting and to dinner. The blockades angered many working people. Those that live in the area where the meeting was taking place had to get clearance from the cops when going to the local store to shop.

A week later we had a Militant Labor Forum called, "Socialism: A Viable Option," where we discussed the growing crisis of world capitalism and why now is a good time to present to workers, farmers, and youth the alternative of making a socialist revolution. Participants in the meeting pointed out why the anti-European Union protests did not advance the struggles of working people. The mobilizations were in a nationalistic framework rather than starting with the common interests of working people around the world. Signs of "Sweden out of the EU" were common as well as banners that pictured the Swedish flag.

The protest posed the EU as a threat to Sweden, rather than capitalism as the threat to all working people. For example, the newly founded reformist group, Attac Swe-

den, wants to tax international capital flow and says in its program, "We want to create a democratic sphere on a global level." These kinds of foggy theories abstract today's conflicts and crises from the class struggle and only serve to distract youth from the real problems in society. Such groups seek to lure youth into believing that capitalism can be reformed into a less evil system.

At the forum we discussed why capitalism cannot be transformed into a just and equal system worthy of man because it is built on a small number of superwealthy ruling families exploiting the vast majority of humanity. Discrimination and racism are built so deeply into the core of the system precisely because they increase profits and keep working people divided.

International Women's Day

Some 1,000 people marched through the streets of Stockholm March 8, to celebrate International Women's Day. We protested discrimination against women and demanded equal rights in all aspects of life. "Full pay and half of the power," was a popular slogan along with signs that read, "Learn to fight" and "Crush Sexism."

YS and Communist League members joined this action and set up a book table. Many young women stopped to discuss feminism and socialism. We sold some pam-

phlets and *Militants* to participants in the march.

On January 28 we organized a "Meet the Young Socialists" event that included a presentation about the YS and what our activities are. Many stayed after dinner for further discussions. One person decided to join the YS.

The new book *Fertile Ground: Che Guevara and Bolivia* by Rodolfo Saldaña was launched in Sweden February 8 at a meeting at the Pathfinder bookstore. Alain Gonzales, third secretary at the Cuban Embassy in Stockholm, spoke along with a new member of the Young Socialists who is originally from Brazil. The book is a firsthand account from Saldaña, who joined ranks in 1966-67 with Guevara to forge a revolutionary movement of workers, peasants, and young people to overturn the military dictatorship in Bolivia and open the road to socialist revolution in South America.

Right now the YS chapter and Communist League in Stockholm are preparing for an upcoming speaking tour of a youth leader from Cuba by having a series of classes called, "Che Guevara and the Cuban Revolution's Place in World Politics." The studies are based on the Pathfinder titles *The Bolivian Diary of Ernesto Che Guevara*, *Pombo: a Man of Che's Guerrilla* by Harry Villegas, *Dynamics of the Cuban Revolution* by Joseph Hansen, and others.

Auto strikers in Indonesia hold firm after thug attack

BY TEGUH WIENARTO

JAKARTA, Indonesia—Workers at the car upholstery factory PT Kadera AR in East Jakarta, Indonesia, have vowed to continue their strike despite a brutal attack upon the workers by company thugs March 29.

The workers, who have been camped inside the factory grounds since the strike began March 19, were asleep when 500 people hired by the bosses arrived in seven buses March 29 and attacked the workers with machetes, swords, and homemade bombs.

One worker, Kimun Effendi, 21, was killed by a bomb thrown by the mob and 11 were injured. Two of the workers were in critical condition because of burns to their bodies. One of those hospitalized, Rachmat Hidayat, remained unconscious as of several days after the attack.

The strike action at the plant came after a year of the declining value of their wages and in response to the employers' harassment of the workers. The strikers have put forward four demands: a 75 percent increase in wages, revocation of the suspensions of two workers, the granting of permanent employee status for workers who have been with the company for more than 18 months, and the dismissal of the company's vice president, Rulichi Sujatim.

Many workers who have been employed at this plant for 15 years only take home Rp

450,000 (US\$41.65) a month. "Our wages are not high enough to live in Jakarta with inflation rising every month," stated one worker.

"Our demands are logical and negotiable, but the company's management has never shown the good intention of meeting the demands of the 600 workers," stated another worker, Zainal, to the *Jakarta Post*.

"Although it is hard to find a job now, we will be better off leaving the company if the management keeps ignoring our demands," stated Djoko, another worker.

In another development, thousands of postal workers struck April 3 for higher pay. The following day, more than 1,500 bus drivers employed by the state transportation company, Perum PPD, walked out. They are demanding payment of last month's wages and pensions and that the government replace the firm's current board of directors because of rampant corruption.



Unionists protest in Jakarta against government's fuel price hike

Kentucky poultry workers win union contract

BY JEFF ROGERS

ALBANY, Kentucky—"We did what we set out to do," said Tim Stanson, a water knife operator at the Cagle-Keystone plant here. "We got the union in, and we got a contract." The 1,500 UFCW members ratified their first union contract on February 27.

Stanson, his wife Michelle, and other members of the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 227 talked with reporters from the *Militant* about some of their views and experiences in the 18-month struggle.

Not much is known about the details of the contract, Stanson said. Another worker, Terry Sawyers, who has worked at the plant for two years, said he was happy about the improvements in the health-care plan. "The deductibles are now about half as much as they used to be," he explained.

Billy Rigney explained that he couldn't vote because the company excluded some classifications such as "premium pay" positions from the election. But he felt that the majority of the workforce was glad to win the union and a contract, "because they can see that someone's standing behind them."

According to workers at the plant, the company waged a dirty fight to prevent union organization. Michelle Stanson recalled how a pro-union worker in her department missed a day of work and was given 14 points, presumably covering past absences. "Twelve will get you fired," she said, but explained that union representatives helped her fight to keep her job.

Last June the National Labor Relations Board cited Cagle-Keystone and its managers with 153 violations of labor law.

Charges included managers interrogating workers, demanding employees wear anti-union T-shirts, trying to coerce workers to spy on other workers, and threatening to close the plant if the workers voted for the union. The company fired 40 workers during the organizing drive, some of whom became staunch campaigners for the union.

Conditions on the job remain tough. The company recently cut back on water usage due to one of their waste ponds being full. This meant that warm water for washing cold

hands was turned off in some departments.

Stanson was proud of what the workers had accomplished, even though the fight is not over. Looking over the rolling farmland, he stated confidently, "We succeeded in doing in this county what no one else has ever done." He also noted that a friend who works in a nearby factory asked him for some union cards.

Jeff Rogers is a member of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 1996 in Atlanta.

IN NEW INTERNATIONAL NO. 10

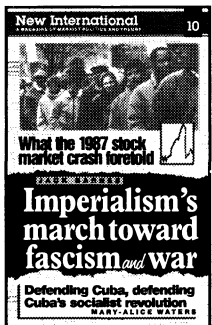
◆ **Imperialism's March toward Fascism and War**
by Jack Barnes

◆ **What the 1987 Stock Market Crash Foretold**

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◆ **The Curve of Capitalist Development**
by Leon Trotsky



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Available from bookstores listed on page 12.

FROM PATHFINDER

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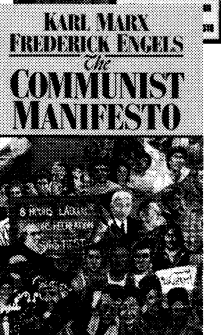
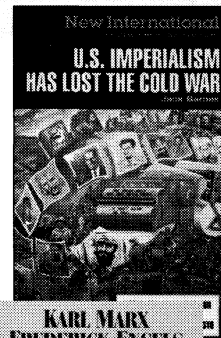
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Socialists gear up for sales campaign

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

Partisans of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* have mapped out plans and sent in goals for launching the international circulation drive to win new subscribers to the two publications. The eight-week campaign will also involve selling 1,800 pamphlets, including a new Pathfinder title *The Coming American Revolution: Organizing to Win the Inevitable Battles* by Socialist Workers Party national secretary Jack Barnes. Two other pamphlets will be included in the sales effort: *Pathfinder Was Born With the October Revolution* by Pathfinder president Mary-Alice Waters and *The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning: The Fraud of Education Reform under Capitalism*, also by Barnes.

As the chart shows, the total of the goals sent from participants in the campaign are higher than we originally estimated, reflecting growing experience in reaching working people interested in reading and discussing the news and perspectives presented in the publications on the job, on street tables, and at protest actions. We will be discussing this response with supporters this week and return with a new chart and figures for the international goals in the next issue.

A number of socialist workers have sent in reports of political activities highlighting their preparations for kicking off a concentrated political effort to sell socialist literature and recruit to the communist movement over the next eight weeks.

"We adopted our goals coming off a banner day last Saturday when we set up two tables in the workers district where we will be going door-to-door with the *Militant* and *PM*," said Tony Dutrow, a meat packer from

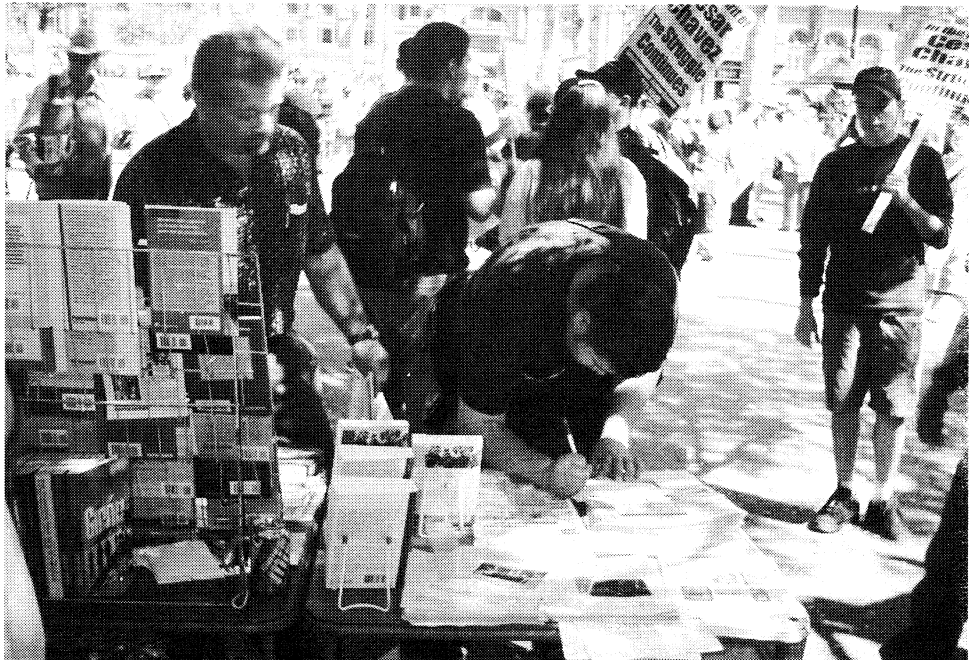
Houston. Teams sold eight copies of the *Militant* and five of *PM*. A high point of their sales activities was the March 31 Cesar Chavez March for Dignity and Amnesty where they sold 17 Pathfinder titles.

"We are also planning a trip to Dallas to get back to garment workers we met earlier at the plant gate of Hollander Home Fashions," said Dutrow. "While in Dallas we're going to meet with a student at the University of Texas to discuss with him and members of his campus group supporting and participating in the Cuba-U.S. Youth Exchange scheduled for July 22-30 in Cuba."

Dutrow said they also plan to get someone there to join a future sales team to the coalfields. One such team is already in the works by *Militant* campaigners in Grand Junction, Colorado. "We want to sell the *Militant* at the McKinley, Black Mesa, and Kayenta mines in New Mexico and Arizona," the team organizers reported. "The miners we know—especially those at McKinley—will definitely be interested in the Pathfinder pamphlets. And some who we met during their strike against the Pittsburg & Midway Coal Co. will be open to discussing the lessons emphasized in the new book *Playa Girón/Bay of Pigs: Washington's First Military Defeat in the Americas*."

"We want to find out more about the fight of uranium miners, many of whom are Navajo. We plan to show the *Militant* article on this struggle to miners and other working people we meet through this coal team," they added.

Their note also mentioned getting out to public meetings scheduled in May around Native American farmers and ranchers who have filed a \$19 billion class action lawsuit



Militant/Shirley Peña

Sales table at Cesar Chavez Day parade in San Francisco in which thousands of people participated, including farm workers, flight attendants, and other unionists.

against the U.S. Department of Agriculture for racist discrimination. They plan to find out more about this struggle and interview some of the ranchers and farmers.

Anyone who would like to participate in future coal teams and other sales effort are welcome to contact the *Militant*.

Meat packers angry about line speed

"We sold the *Militant* and *PM* on April 7 to meat packers at Hormel and Quality Pork Processors at the plant gate in Austin, Minnesota," reports Karen Ray. The *Militant* featured coverage on the strike of workers at Hormel-owned Rochelle Foods in Illinois. "The mood is pretty angry with many workers saying the company has cranked the line speed up beyond contract limits over last several weeks. Workers at both plants found out they have been working nine hours a day

and every Saturday since the strike began at Rochelle Foods," said Ray. Some of the workers had read the *Militant* before. They sold 11 copies of the *Militant*, four *PM*s, one *Militant* subscription and one *PM* subscription.

Militant/PM subscription drive to win new readers April 14-June 10

	Militant	PM	Pamphlet
Country	Goal	Goal	Goal
Australia	12	2	25
Canada			
Montreal	12	4	40
Toronto	20	3	40
Vancouver	15	2	35
Canada Total	47	9	115
Iceland	8	1	12
New Zealand			
Auckland	10	1	20
Christchurch	8	1	10
NZ Total	18	2	30
Sweden	12	5	20
United Kingdom	35	10	90
United States			
Allentown	16	4	20
Atlanta	30	15	50
Birmingham	25	3	55
Boston	25	8	30
Brooklyn	70	30	150
Charlotte	12	4	25
Chicago	30	20	75
Cleveland	20	5	30
Des Moines	30	20	45
Detroit	20	5	40
Fresno	8	6	20
Grand Junction	25	5	35
Houston	30	10	70
Los Angeles	50	25	80
Miami	50	15	75
NY Garment Dist	60	45	125
Upper Manhattan	70	50	100
Newark	40	20	75
Omaha	12	18	20
Philadelphia	30	10	60
Pittsburgh	40	5	60
San Francisco	50	25	100
Seattle	20	8	55
Tampa	8	4	15
Twin Cities	35	25	50
Washington	27	13	60
Tucson	8	5	
U.S. Total	841	403	1520
International Total	973	425	1767

In the unions

Australia			
MJA	2		5
Meat workers	2		3
Total	4		8
United States			
UFCW	60	60	125
UMWA	25	1	25
UNITE	25	20	60

INS cops raid poultry plant in Pennsylvania

Continued from front page

atrocious. So far 15 workers have been sent back to Mexico. We have our lawyers handling everything possible and we have demanded workers be paid for the time they were out of work. What happened at Empire," he said, "is just a little pebble on the beach of what is happening all over this country. It has to be exposed."

The raid has been described in local papers as one of the biggest ever in Pennsylvania, and Young said he had not heard of any of this size before.

Workers arrested came from countries in Africa, as well as Chile, Colombia, El Salvador, Honduras, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Mexico. The INS said they will immediately deport those arrested who are from Mexico while all others would be issued notices to appear before an immigration judge and released on their own recognizance. By the next day 10 Mexican workers had been deported, three workers were still held on other allegations, and 122 workers were released. Those set free have hearing dates in June, July, and August in Philadelphia. But they are unable to work at old jobs while their immigration status is up in the air. Many have left the area to find work elsewhere.

Nelson Renderos, a 30-year-old Salvadoran worker at the plant, told the *Lewistown*

Sentinel, "I've got to look for another job now. I'm illegal here, but we all need work." Renderos has been at the plant for about four years and makes \$8.50 to \$9.00 an hour. His family remains behind in El Salvador and he said he has tried to send \$100 to \$200 a month to his mother.

Another worker was not picked up by the INS because he had to stay with a sick child that morning and missed work. He said he is nervous about going back to the plant, but his wife has work papers and is still working. He said he doesn't know what he and his family will do.

Paula, a worker from Chile, described the raid. "It was a quarter to 10 in the morning," she said. "Night shift goes home at 10:00. They called all the workers into the cafeteria. The police told Americans to go to one corner, and Chileans, Mexicans, and Chinese to other corners. They said to us 'are you legal or illegal?' Then they handcuffed those they decided to arrest and took them away." She reported that many workers, including pregnant women and women with children, were photographed, identified, and released. Those arrested were put on buses. "People were very scared. Lots of people were crying," she said.

Paula is just one of a growing number of Chileans who have recently come to work

at Empire due to the poor state of the economy in her native country. "Workers from countries like Peru and Bolivia have always come to Chile for work," one worker explained. "Now we have to come here."

Paula came to the United States a month and a half ago. She was swept up in the raid and now must appear in court. As an example of the impact of the raid on families, she said she supports her four-year-old daughter and her mother on her wages at Empire. "I can't go back to Chile. I don't have the money," she said. "I have no idea how I'm going to take care of my family." Starting wages are \$7 an hour until a worker gets into the union.

The biggest problem workers face on the job, Paula said, is the line speed. After a month on a knife job her hands have become numb and she has difficulty opening them in the morning. Paula's normal workweek is 10 hours per day four days a week. But she has worked up to 70 hours in a week. Other workers reported that overtime is voluntary in the plant but many workers put in long hours.

Another Chilean couple missed the raid because they were not at work that day. They explained that they can make in four 10-hour days what they made in a month in Chile. They were planning to go back to work but were very nervous about the threat of deportation. They did not think the company had collaborated with the INS in the raid. As they explained, the company has a hard time keeping workers and this was a particularly busy time for them.

Workers reported that local churches and the company are organizing support for workers affected by the raid. Some immigration lawyers are available free of charge.

Wilma Yocum, a retired union garment worker who worked at Empire in the early 1980s, said there were "a good number of Spanish-speaking workers from Central America" when she was in the plant. "They were very hard workers. I'm very upset that people who worked that hard could be treated that way," she said.

Chris Remple is a member of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees Local 622 in Jefferson, Pennsylvania.

Protests against cop brutality

Continued from front page

trolled the Over-the Rhine district in the Black community, dispersing youth and adults in a five by 15 block area.

Over the next days, youthful crowds of protesters carrying signs saying "Don't Shoot" and "Cincinnati Cops: Stop Shooting Black People," were met by hundreds of cops in full riot gear firing tear gas, rubber projectiles, and bean bags filled with metal pellets.

An entourage of city officials, including Mayor Charles Luken, visited the Black community to urge residents to be calm. They were met by one resident who angrily said, "You come here for the broken glass, right?" referring to damage done to local shops. "Where were you all these years before, when we were being hassled by the police?"

Last month a number of civil rights orga-

nizations and the American Civil Liberties Union filed a suit in federal court in Cleveland accusing the city of a "30-year pattern of racial profiling."

Some 43 percent of Cincinnati's 331,000 people are Black. According to the *New York Times*, the suit says that Blacks "are routinely singled out by the police for minor offenses far more than whites are and that police officers 'tend to use excessive and deadly force against African Americans more readily than against whites.'"

NAACP president Kwame Mfume issued a press release calling for a federal investigation of the Cincinnati police department and the killing of Timothy Thomas. "If you are a person of color living in the United States, the police often look at you differently," he said. "The NAACP and the African American community will never tolerate excessive police force."

Cuban youth meet students, workers in Canada

BY SYLVIE CHARBIN

MONTREAL—"The Cuban people will never abandon our principles for which we have fought and died. And we will never allow capitalism to dictate our future," said Cuban youth leader Yamila Lafourie to a meeting of 40 people here at Concordia University.

Lafourie, a leader of the Union of Young Communists of Cuba (UJC), and Alfredo Bárzaga, a leader of the Federation of University Students of Cuba (FEU), spoke to more than 450 people on "Youth and the Cuban Revolution" during a one-week visit here.

A student at the Concordia meeting had asked Lafourie what would happen if the U.S. government lifted its 40-year embargo against Cuba. Lafourie said the Cuban people do not expect Washington to end the embargo, since the conditions that Washington has set for doing so would mean the Cuban people would have to abandon the basic principles and accomplishments of their revolution, which are based on solidarity with working people around the globe and meeting human needs, including free and universal education and health care for workers and farmers in Cuba.

The tour here included meetings at university campuses, an immigrant workers center, a Haitian community center, and with youth who have organized several actions in support of the Palestinian struggle. The tour also included a visit to the Kahnawake Mohawk Reserve, just south of Montreal, and participation in a two-day symposium organized by a Quebec teachers federation.

At a meeting of 60 people at the University of Quebec in Montreal (UQAM), the youth leaders said young people in Cuba are gaining confidence in the revolution and their ability to be part of solving social and economic problems resulting from what Lafourie called a "double embargo"—the collapse of trade with the Soviet Union at the beginning of the 1990s and the continuing U.S. government embargo.

Lafourie explained that young people in Cuba are joining efforts to improve primary school education and raise the cultural level of the entire population. For example, in order to respond to the interest in the "University for All," a hugely popular program that offers English, music and literary appreciation, geography, history, and other



Quality Meat workers in Toronto meet with Cuban Federation of University Students leader Alfredo Bárzaga, left, March 29.

courses, Cuban youth organizations helped to distribute tens of thousands of TVs and VCRs to schools and communities to ensure everyone could participate. Some 1,900 rural schools have been fitted with solar energy panels in order to provide adequate electrical supplies. These efforts also include FEU and UJC-sponsored youth brigades that go out into working-class neighborhoods, starting in Havana, to assess and help resolve the most pressing problems that families and children are encountering.

In answer to a question on primary school education in Cuba, Lafourie said that many teachers had left their jobs in order to work in tourism because of the sharp economic crisis that began in 1990. This has resulted

in a shortage of teachers in primary schools. Recently, however, the FEU sent out an appeal to young people who had abandoned their university studies to replace these teachers. Three times more students volunteered to do so than the FEU had expected. The goal of reducing the teacher/student ratio in primary schools from up to 1 teacher for 42 students in some Havana schools, to 1 in 20 is widely expected to be attained by this September.

Revolutionary leadership

At virtually every meeting the two Cuban youth were asked what will happen when Cuban president and revolutionary leader Fidel Castro is no longer in active

leadership of the revolution. At a meeting with mostly Filipino workers and youth at the Immigrant Workers Center, Lafourie, who is a doctor, answered: "We are materialists and we know that Fidel is human. He, like everyone else, will pass away one day. We hope that he will live as long as possible, because he is a symbol of our revolution. But if the survival of our revolution depends on just one man, it would not have lasted for 42 years. Our revolution is one of a whole people with many leaders, including among the youth. Many of our leaders have died, such as Ernesto Che Guevara, but their ideas live on."

Participants in a meeting of mostly Haitian workers told Bárzaga and Lafourie that Cuba is an example for the people of Haiti and thanked the two youth leaders for the unmatched aid that the Cuban revolution provides to the people of Haiti. For example, 600 Cuban doctors and nurses are now working in Haiti, with a goal of significantly lowering the infant mortality rate and attending to other vital health needs of those living in some of the country's most impoverished areas. In addition, 25 Haitian youth are presently being trained in Cuba to become doctors and have pledged to serve people in rural areas in Haiti. A Haitian worker at the event decided to donate \$100 to help cover the cost of the tour.

During their visit, Bárzaga and Lafourie invited young people they met to participate in a November 4-11 Canada-Cuba Youth and Student Exchange that the UJC and other organizations are sponsoring in Havana. Several students signed up to participate in this exchange, as well as for the upcoming World Youth Festival in Algeria, August 8-16.

Sylvie Charbin is a garment worker and a member of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees in Montreal.

Cuban youth leaders speak in New England

Continued from front page

at the University of Havana and a member of the National Secretariat of the FEU. Dueñas, 28, is a professor of journalism at the University of Havana and a member of the National Bureau of the Union of Young Communists.

At the Bridgewater State meeting, attended by 125 students and faculty members, the two answered a range of questions on Cuban culture, the U.S. embargo of Cuba, and freedom of the press in Cuba. The meeting was sponsored by a number of departments and the student organization La Sociedad Latina.

At a meeting with meat packers who are part of a union organizing drive at Kayem Foods in Boston, a worker from the Dominican Republic asked the youth leaders about measures Cuba has been forced to take, such as opening up the economy to tourism. "This brings with it all kinds of negative things such as prostitution, homosexuality, drugs. How do you stop these vices?" he asked.

"We are an underdeveloped country and need investment in order to develop our economy," Dueñas said. "Tourism is an important part of our gross national product today and without it we would have even less foreign investment. The problems of drugs, prostitution, the spread of sexually transmitted diseases, and people visiting the country who bring with them a culture of littering all have to be addressed."

"When trying to attract tourists, we seek to interest people in the history and culture of our country," he said. "We have also gained a better understanding of homosexuality. But this was not a result of combating the negative effects of tourism, but as a result of our education. In all societies there are people attracted to the same sex. We were able to have a Cuban discussion about this. It is reflected in television programs and in film. Before, homosexuals were looked down upon in our society; there is a lot of machismo. Now there is much less of that."

Dueñas explained that there have been "negative effects of legalizing use of the U.S. dollar and expanding the tourist industry" following the collapse of aid and trade with the former Soviet Union. "We have sought to counter the impact of these measures by having an educated society. Otherwise we face losing the revolution due to economic pressures."

"Can we be sure the opening up of the economy won't also mean political openings to reverse the revolution?" asked the Dominican worker.

"There is no guarantee," replied Dueñas. "But because the Cuban people are committed to a socialist course we can open up in this way for a time. When deciding what

measures to take we always start with how best to defend socialism. I can't think of any other country where the economy came to a halt as it did in Cuba. We were all alone. We were totally dependent on the Soviet Bloc, which was one of our mistakes. There is no clearer proof than what we accomplished over the course of the last 10 years."

"We have made a revolution within our revolution," Martínez added.

Martínez told a crowd of 50 people gathered in the student center of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology April 6 that the continuity of the revolution is guaranteed "because the revolution was built by the people. Our enemies think that without Fidel Castro the revolution will disappear. But a leadership without mass support would not have been able to achieve what the revolution has achieved."

"Young people make up 50 percent of our country," Dueñas added. "The revolution is made by young people. At each stage of our revolution youth have been at the forefront. It was the youth who were at the center of the triumph of the revolution in 1959. It was youth who led the campaign against illiteracy. It was youth who confronted the health problems of the country. Youth took leading roles in agriculture, industry, and in research centers."

"Internationalism has played an important role in the formation of the youth," he added. "We were reeducated in problems facing other countries that we were no longer familiar with. We helped other countries in defense, health, and meeting other needs."



New York event celebrates Cuban youth visit

BY JASON ALESSIO

NEW YORK—An evening event here sponsored by Casa de las Américas and the New England Cuban Youth Lectures Committee welcomed Yanelis Martínez and Javier Dueñas to the area and celebrated a successful tour of the region. Participants gave a warm send-off to the two Cuban youth leaders to Minnesota, the final leg of the tour.

Luis Miranda, director of Casa de las Américas and longtime defender of the Cuban Revolution, welcomed the Cu-

Continued on Page 14

Anniversary of the Victory at Playa Girón

MIAMI

Conference: The Bay of Pigs — 40 Years Later

Sat., April 14, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Speakers:

Rafael Cáncel Miranda, Puerto Rican independence fighter and former political prisoner of the U.S. government
Andrés Gómez, national coordinator of the Antonio Maceo Brigade

Mary-Alice Waters, president of Pathfinder Press, editor of the recently released *Playa Girón: Washington's First Military Defeat in the Americas*

Luis Tornés, editor of *Miami Post*

John Due, Miami attorney and human rights activist

Yanelis Martínez, law student from Cuba, member of the National Secretariat of the Cuban Federation of University Students (FEU)

Holiday Inn, Coral Gables
2051 SW Le Jeune Road.

Donation: \$10.

For more information: (305) 951-9356.

Sponsored by: Greater Miami Free Speech Coalition • Miami Coalition to End the U.S. Embargo of Cuba • Antonio Maceo Brigade • ATC • Boricua Human Rights Network in Orlando.

NEW YORK

Casa de las Américas Celebrate 40th Anniversary of the Victory at Playa Girón

Sat., April 14, 8 p.m.

33 West 14th Street
Donation: \$10

Sponsored by: Pastors for Peace • Vieques Support Campaign • Comité Pedro Albizu Campos • Frente Unido de la Revolución Dominicana • Working Group on Puerto Rico/

Socialist Front • Fuerza de la Revolución • Pro Libertad • Workers World Party • Freedom Socialist Party • Socialist Workers Party • International Action Center • Young Socialists

PHILADELPHIA

Why the Cold War against Cuba Doesn't End: The View from Havana.

Tue., April 17, 6:00 p.m.

Haverford College, Sharpless Auditorium, College Lane, off Lancaster Ave. (Rt. 30).

Wed., April 18, 7:30 p.m.

Reception: 7:00 p.m.

University of Pennsylvania, Houston Hall, 3417 Spruce St., 2nd Floor, Ben Franklin Room.

Speakers:

Oscar Redondo, First Secretary, Cuban Interests Section

Jorge González, Director for the United States, Cuban Ministry of Culture.

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AUCKLAND, NEW ZEALAND

Celebrate 40th Anniversary of Cuba's Victory at the Bay of Pigs/ Playa Girón.

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Reportback from participants in World Solidarity Conference and Australia/New Zealand work-study brigade to Cuba.

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Pathfinder answers attack on new book on Cuba's April 1961 victory at Bay of Pigs

The following review of the new Pathfinder title, *Playa Girón/Bay of Pigs: Washington's First Military Defeat in the Americas*, was published in the April 8 issue of *El Diario/La Prensa*, a Spanish-language daily in New York City. The review was published under the title, "Houdini en Playa Girón."

The subhead to the article reads: "On the occasion of the meeting in Havana March 21-23 involving U.S. historians and some members of Brigade 2506, the author of *Girón no fue sólo en abril* [Girón was not only in April] (Havana: Editorial Orbe, 1979) reviews the book *Bay of Pigs* just published by Pathfinder Press."

The meeting referred to was the March 22-24 United States-Cuba conference, "Girón: 40 Years Later." The exchange was one of the events being held in Cuba and the United States to mark the 40th anniversary of Cuba's victory, in which an invasion force of 1,500 Cuban counterrevolutionaries—trained, armed, financed, and deployed by the U.S. government—was crushed in less than 72 hours by Cuba's revolutionary militias, police, and Rebel Army.

Several books on the subject were presented at the conference, including Pathfinder's new title, which had just been released in both English and Spanish editions.

We are also publishing here the full text of an April 9 letter to the editor of *El Diario* sent by Pathfinder's president, Mary-Alice Waters, in response to the review.



BY MIGUEL ANGEL SÁNCHEZ

Pathfinder Press has just published the book *Playa Girón/Bay of Pigs: Washington's First Military Defeat in the Americas*.

Pathfinder is characterized editorially by a left-wing perspective toward the complex political problems of Latin America.

The book is based primarily on the testimony of José Ramón Fernández, a high-level Cuban government official who was one of the principal leaders of the troops that fought and defeated the Cuban exile Brigade 2506 in April 1961.

Fernández's testimony, which Pathfinder is now publishing, is neither original nor unpublished, since it was one of the documents from the July 1999 trial held in Havana that condemned the United States, and was published in book form. The work therefore lacks material that would add new information to the subject.

What is surprising about this book, based on court testimony and public speeches by Fidel Castro and Fernández, is the lack of ethics by the publishing house that put it out.

On the back cover of the book is a photograph taken April 20 or 21, 1961, which is clumsily cropped on the left, a space that is

covered over with a brown strip.

The aim of such mutilation is to make the image of José Abrantes Fernández disappear. Abrantes was then head of Fidel Castro's escort and would later become a division general and Minister of the Interior for more than a decade. Abrantes died in prison while serving a 20-year sentence, accused of not discovering drug trafficking by his subordinates.

The integrity of a publishing house that lends itself to such distortion of history becomes questionable. The book's text meticulously makes various protagonists from Playa Girón disappear, such as pilots Gen. Rafael del Pino and Col. Alvaro Prendes, as well as Cuban historians on the topic whose studies are not cited in the bibliography because they no longer live on the island.

Because of these attempts to rewrite history, those interested in the subject will have to consult uncontaminated works, such as Peter Wyden's 1979 book. This is too bad, since it's time a history of this battle was published that was not based on ideological passions or immediate political interests.

Caption reads: Photo: Pathfinder Press and the archives of Miguel Angel Sánchez. The back cover of the new book by Pathfinder with the mutilated photo, above and below. In the left of the original photo is the "disappeared" José Abrantes Fernández, Minister of the Interior, who died in prison. Abrantes, Del Pino, and others are now "erased" from history. In the original photo, Abrantes can be seen beside José Ramón Fernández.



'Proud of our record'

Dear Sir,

In an April 8 review of Pathfinder Press's newly released, *Playa Girón / Bay of Pigs: Washington's First Military Defeat in the Americas*, Miguel Angel Sánchez attempts to discredit the book for its "lack of material that would add new information to the subject" and impugns the ethics and integrity of the publisher. He is wrong on both counts.

Sánchez asserts that the 1999 testimony of José Ramón Fernández, a centerpiece of the book, is "neither original nor unpublished." This is inaccurate. The testimony by Fernández—the commander of the main column of revolutionary Cuban forces that defeated the U.S.-financed and organized invasion at the Bay of Pigs—has indeed been broadcast, posted on the web, and quoted from in Cuban publications more than once during the last year and a half. But it has not previously appeared in print in either Spanish or English, in Cuba or elsewhere. Pathfinder has published the new book simultaneously in both languages.

The 1961 speeches and statements by Fidel Castro, Ernesto Che Guevara, and Raúl Castro contained in the book have been inaccessible to the Spanish-speaking public for decades. For English-language readers,

not only has most of the material long been unavailable outside library archives, but a number of items have never before been translated or published in English.

Sánchez's most serious accusation is that the publisher lacks integrity. As proof he charges that a photo on the back cover has been "mutilated" in a clumsy attempt to make José Abrantes Fernández disappear from history.

In 1989 Division General Abrantes, minister of the interior, was arrested, tried, and convicted of abuse of authority, negligence in carrying out his duties, and unauthorized use of government funds and resources, and sentenced to the maximum term of 20 years in prison (actions that in and of themselves were a remarkable demonstration of the integrity of the revolutionary leadership in Cuba and its support among the Cuban people). Sánchez implies that Pathfinder is guilty of a Stalinist falsification of history, however, because the back cover photo as cropped does not include Abrantes, who was walking ahead of and to the right of Fernández.

Pathfinder had in its archive three different prints of the photo selected. Each version was cropped differently to include a number of individuals in addition to Castro and Fernández. One print shows as many as twenty combatants who were part of the entourage. The version published by *El Diario*, is cropped to focus on three individuals—Fernández, Castro, and Abrantes. The purpose of the back cover photo was to show the two principal authors together at Playa Girón in April 1961. Pathfinder selected the version of the photo that best met that editorial and design need—without knowledge or concern for the identity of any of the surrounding individuals since they were not the subject. No one was airbrushed out or digitally removed from the photo. As is obvious to any objective reader, there was no attempt to rewrite history.

At the recent Havana conference on "Playa Girón: 40 Years Later", to which the review refers, a large blowup of the full photo that *El Diario/La Prensa* reprints part of was displayed in the impressive photo exhibit prepared by the Cuban hosts of the conference and mounted in the lobby of the



Top, review in *El Diario/La Prensa*. Bottom, one version of the photo includes over 20 people. The photo on the back cover of *Playa Girón/Bay of Pigs* is cropped to feature the two authors, Fidel Castro and José Ramón Fernández.

Convention Center.

Pathfinder's increasingly bilingual catalog contains nearly 400 titles by a range of authors that includes revolutionary giants such as Leon Trotsky, Rosa Luxemburg, Maurice Bishop, Ernesto Che Guevara, and Malcolm X, to name but a few, all of whom have been victims of attempts by various powerful forces to falsify their views or erase them from the record of history. Pathfinder's integrity and record of keeping their words in print not for months or years, but for decades, is unmatched. It is one we are justly proud of.

Sincerely,
Mary-Alice Waters
President, Pathfinder Press

U.S. students attend Cuban medical school

BY HILDA CUZCO

The first group of eight U.S. citizens arrived in Havana April 3 to begin studies at the Latin American Medical School. The school was opened two years ago by the Cuban government to train, free of charge, youth from low-income families across Latin America as doctors and other medical personnel.

The new students, the first of 500 expected from the United States to attend the six-year program, are from California, Illinois, Minnesota, New York, and Texas.

The program is an initiative by Cuban president Fidel Castro who offered to extend free medical training to U.S. youth during a meeting last May with a delegation from the Congressional Black Caucus. "It would be hard for your government to oppose such a program," said Castro at the time. "It would be a trial for them. Morally, how could they refuse?"

"This is an opportunity for me to study medicine and become a great doctor while learning about the Cuban medical system," said Karima Mosi, 22, of San Diego during a warm welcoming ceremony. Mosi is one of the six women and two men in the first group to attend the medical school and will join more than 4,000 other students from 24 countries in the Americas and Africa.

José Manuel Cochoy, a Guatemalan student from the Student Leadership Board, pointed out that the students from the United States will also appreciate the international friendship and fraternity at the school.

Nadege Louiseau, from Florida, thanked the audience for the warm welcome and the

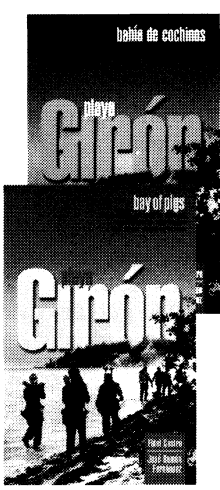
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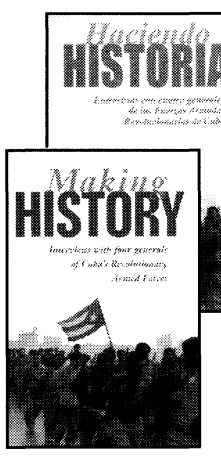
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Playa Girón/Bay of Pigs
Washington's First Military Defeat in the Americas

In less than 72 hours of combat during April 1961 near the Bay of Pigs, Cuba's revolutionary militias, police, and armed forces defeated an invasion by 1,500 mercenaries armed, trained, supported, and deployed by Washington. In the process, the Cuban people not only transformed their country and themselves, but set an example for workers and farmers across the Americas and the world. With political consciousness, class solidarity, unflinching courage, and a revolutionary leadership displaying an impeccable sense of timing, it is possible to stand up to enormous might and seemingly insurmountable odds—and win. Forty years later the U.S. rulers can still neither accept nor extinguish this example. Foreword by Jack Barnes. In English and Spanish. \$20.

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Making History
Interviews with Four Generals of Cuba's Revolutionary Armed Forces

Interviews with Cuban generals Néstor López Cuba, Enrique Carreras, José Ramón Fernández, and Harry Villegas. Through the stories of these outstanding revolutionaries—three of them leaders of the Cuban forces at the Bay of Pigs that defeated the invaders within 72 hours—we can see the class dynamics that have shaped our entire epoch. We can understand how the people of Cuba, as they struggle to build a new society, have for more than 40 years held Washington at bay. With an introduction by Mary-Alice Waters. In English and Spanish. \$15.95. **Special offer \$12**

Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 12.

Cuban fighters recall April 1961 victory

How teenage antiaircraft gunners helped to rapidly defeat U.S.-backed mercenaries

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL
AND MARY-ALICE WATERS

HAVANA—"The antiaircraft gunners who fought at Playa Girón were almost all 15, 16, 17 years old. At 22, I was one of the oldest, and I was put in charge of the units that went to the battlefield from the Granma base," said Enrique Dorta.

Dorta, now a colonel in Cuba's Revolutionary Armed Forces, was one of the Cuban combatants who took part in the March 22-24 conference here on "Girón: 40 Years Later." Participants in the U.S.-Cuban gathering discussed the April 1961 Cuban victory over a U.S.-organized counterrevolutionary invasion at the Bay of Pigs. The main force of mercenary soldiers surrendered at Girón beach, the name by which the battle is known in Cuba.

Dorta, now retired from active duty, spoke with *Militant* reporters about the young antiaircraft artillerymen who fought at Playa Girón. Cuban president Fidel Castro, in an early speech that saluted the fearlessness and courage of these teenage fighters, called them *Los niños héroes de Playa Girón*—the heroic boys of Playa Girón—and that is still how they are popularly known.

There is even a book by that title, consisting largely of interviews with soldiers of the antiaircraft units that took part in that battle. The author, José Mayo, was one of these combatants.

One of those interviewed in *Los niños héroes* is Manuel Alfredo Abad, today a hotel worker in Havana. "I was 17 at the time," said Abad, who had been closely following the news about the conference on Playa Girón. "It's a very heavy job, and they looked for young people to do it. I was trained to use a *cuatro bocas*," he added, using the popular term in Cuba for the Czech-made four-barreled heavy machine guns.

deep impact on Manuel, as they did on millions of Cubans who were involved in them. He was also influenced by the example of his mother, who had worked with the July 26 Movement during the revolutionary war in the late 1950s.

In response to a steady escalation of U.S.-backed acts of sabotage and counterrevolutionary terror in Cuba, the National Revolutionary Militias were constituted in October 1959, and Manuel Abad joined them.

In late 1960, as arms purchased from the Soviet-bloc countries began to arrive in Cuba, he enrolled in a course for 12.7-millimeter antiaircraft machine gun operators. He completed his training, which took place at the Granma military base west of Havana, just days before the Bay of Pigs invasion.

Dorta had become involved in political activity before the revolutionary victory. Growing up in a poor farm family in Las Villas province in central Cuba, he got involved in supporting a cigar workers strike in 1952 at the age of 14, and a sugar workers strike three years later. Both actions were savagely attacked by the army and police.

In 1957 he joined the July 26 Movement and helped organize clandestine work in his home town, before joining the revolutionary forces fighting in the Escambray mountains. He was part of the forces under the command of Ernesto Che Guevara that captured Santa Clara, Cuba's third-largest city, on New Year's Eve of 1958 as the dictator Fulgencio Batista fled the country. By that time he held the rank of lieutenant in the Rebel Army.

After the revolutionary victory, Dorta was chosen for the first officer training course under Rebel Army commander Camilo Cienfuegos. When he completed the course he was designated as an instructor, first at the Managua military base and then at the Granma base west of Havana. The Granma



Courtesy of José Ramón Fernández

At the Australia sugar mill, used as the forward command post of the revolutionary Cuban forces in the battle of Playa Girón. At center, facing camera, are commander-in-chief Fidel Castro and José Ramón Fernández, who commanded the main Cuban column. To the left of Castro is Enrique Dorta (standing sideways). José Alvarez Bravo, head of the Granma base, the main training center for antiaircraft artillery, is in foreground (with back to camera).

ants were killed."

The planes were piloted by CIA-organized Cuban counterrevolutionaries. The raid, ordered by U.S. president John F. Kennedy, was an unsuccessful attempt to wipe out Cuba's handful of combat aircraft on the ground, in preparation for the imminent invasion.

The next day, as Cuba's militias, revolutionary police, and armed forces prepared for combat, Castro addressed a huge rally in Havana.

Huddled around their portable radios, Abad recounts, the young artillerymen listened to news of the bombing raids. "We also listened to Fidel's speech at the rally to honor those killed in the attack by the mercenaries' planes," he said. "We all agreed with Fidel when he said our revolution was socialist, because, although we didn't understand well what socialism was, anything Fidel said we supported. Someone declared that if Fidel was a socialist, then we were socialists too, and everyone there agreed with that."

In the early morning hours of April 17, the U.S.-backed invasion force, Brigade 2506, landed at the Bay of Pigs. The militias, army, air force, and revolutionary police were immediately deployed.

"Initially, two antiaircraft batteries were sent rapidly to protect the airstrip near the Australia sugar mill, where the forward command post was established," Dorta explained. "Then I took six batteries of 'cuatro bocas' and one battery of 37-millimeter artillery pieces and we headed to the command post."

At first, Abad said, members of his unit "were concerned because we knew where the other batteries were headed, and we were worried that we'd be left at the Granma base." At 5:00 a.m. on April 17 when they too received their orders to march to the Bay of Pigs, "we were overjoyed, because we were going to fight the mercenaries."

"All along the way, people were telling us to hit the invaders hard. They also expressed surprise to see how young the antiaircraft gunners were."

Determined not to be left out of combat

En route to the Australia sugar mill, the column was ordered to stop and the truck behind Abad's unit accidentally hit their artillery piece, damaging the metal bar used to pull it.

"We were told we had to leave the unit there," he said. But they were determined not to be left behind. "We decided to disassemble the gun and load it onto the truck. We took off the tires, the barrels, and the four wheels, and lifted up that hunk of steel that weighed a ton. As soon as we had loaded it onto the bed of the truck, the caravan of antiaircraft batteries resumed. As our truck moved on, we reassembled the four barrels.

By the time we reached the Australia mill it was ready to shoot at the enemy planes or at the mercenaries if necessary.

"It was an enormous effort to take apart the gun, lift it onto the truck, and then reassemble it, but that was a thousand times preferable to remaining behind on the highway and not being able to fight the mercenaries."

Dorta explained that the column arrived at the Australia sugar mill by 5:00 p.m. "Fernández immediately ordered me to take two artillery pieces and advance to Pálpite," he said. Captain José Ramón Fernández was commanding the column of forces coming in from the Australia mill. The town of Pálpite was on the road to Playa Larga, the beach where one of the landings had taken place, and the mercenaries were still holding a well-fortified position.

"We advanced at night as close to Playa Larga as we could get. When dawn came, we realized we were almost on top of the enemy lines!"

When Abad's unit arrived the morning of April 18 in Pálpite, they saw the first enemy plane and immediately opened fire. "Our gun worked just perfectly from the bed of the truck," Abad reported with pride.

While the nighttime assault on the enemy forces at Playa Larga failed to dislodge them, it still had an impact. Despite their favorable positions, the mercenaries abandoned Playa Larga early on the second day of battle and withdrew toward Playa Girón, and the revolutionary forces pressed forward.

On the road from Playa Larga to Girón, the revolutionary troops reached an area where enemy planes had bombed and strafed several buses that carried militiamen from Battalion 123. "I felt grief for the comrades who had been wounded, burned, or killed," said Abad. "But at the same time I felt a deep hatred for the mercenaries who had come to murder Cubans."

Both Abad's and Dorta's units saw further combat over the course of the three-day battle, which ended with the surrender of the main group of invading troops at Playa Girón.

"We entered Playa Girón on April 19 at around 5:00 p.m.," Dorta said, "and we began to round up the mercenaries." While their main leaders had fled into the swamp where they were later captured, almost all the Brigade 2506 troops surrendered.

Invaders wanted return to exploitation

When Abad's unit reached Playa Girón, he said, some of the mercenaries were stunned to see that many of the soldiers who had fought and defeated them were so young.

"When I saw the mercenaries at Playa Girón, I couldn't help feeling an urge to kill them," Abad explained. "Because of them,

Continued on Page 12



Militant/Martín Koppel

Enrique Dorta identifies for interviewer Mary-Alice Waters individuals in an April 1961 photo in the new Pathfinder book *Playa Girón/Bay of Pigs: Washington's First Military Defeat in the Americas*. Dorta, a colonel in Cuba's Revolutionary Armed Forces, commanded one of the artillery units that fought at the Bay of Pigs. Retired from active duty, he is a member of the Association of Combatants of the Cuban Revolution.

The accounts given by Dorta and Abad, like the interviews contained in the book, vividly capture why Cuba, in less than 72 hours, was able to crush a mercenary invasion financed and organized by the mightiest imperialist power in the world. They paint a picture of the workers and farmers who made the socialist revolution in this Caribbean nation—and help explain why four decades later revolutionary Cuba remains a living example to working people the world over.

Abad was 14 years old when workers and farmers in Cuba, led by the Rebel Army and the July 26 Movement headed by Fidel Castro, overthrew the U.S.-backed Batista dictatorship in January 1959 and began building the first free territory of the Americas. The revolutionary leadership organized working people to begin to carry out a land reform, a mass campaign to wipe out illiteracy, build housing and schools, eliminate institutionalized racism, and other far-reaching measures.

These revolutionary developments had a

base became the main training center for the antiaircraft gunners.

Dorta explained that well before the end of 1960, it was clear that Washington, increasingly hostile to the revolutionary measures that Cuba's workers and farmers were taking, was preparing a military assault on the island. The only question was when and where an invasion would take place.

"Normally, antiaircraft artillery training takes six months," he explained. "But we began the training in October and completed it by January. Our Czech instructors were astounded. They didn't think it could be done. But we knew we didn't have six months."

'If Fidel was a socialist, we were too'

"On April 15, three simultaneous air attacks took place," Dorta said. "The antiaircraft batteries at [the Havana military base] Ciudad Libertad, where one bombing took place, immediately went into action. They shot down a B-26 that fell in the sea near the Comodoro Hotel. Seven Cuban combat-

'Without culture there can be no freedom'

Unionists in Cuba prepare for congress

Reprinted below is the second part of the Theses submitted for discussion and adoption at the 18th national congress of the Central Organization of Cuban Workers (CTC), Cuba's trade union federation, which will take place in Havana April 28-30. In last week's issue the *Militant* printed the first 24 of the 96 theses in the document.

Over the past several months, hundreds of thousands of workers across the island have discussed the CTC Theses in factory assemblies and other workplace meetings in preparation for the congress.

The initial section of this document takes up the central importance of Cuban workers strengthening their active political role in defense of the revolution. It calls for the union movement to join in an "offensive of revolutionary ideas" to promote what Cuban president Fidel Castro has called "a general, rounded culture" that reinforces Cuba's national identity.

The document notes that Cuba has been gradually recovering from the worst years of the economic crisis known as the Special Period, precipitated in the early 1990s by the collapse in trade at preferential prices with the former Soviet bloc countries. For the last decade the Cuban people have faced more directly the unequal trade relations and exploitation imposed through the world capitalist market.

The Theses explain that the Special Period continues however, and that the union movement must fight to counteract the social inequalities that have increased. The trade unions must work for "greater efficiency and increased production and services" in order to maximize resources available to meet social needs; giving priority to "families with very low incomes, including retired people, elderly people living alone, and single mothers"; and workers taking the initiative in their workplaces to combat theft and corruption.

The following are theses 25-68. The translation is by the *Militant*, as are the footnotes and text in brackets.



The struggle for ideas

25. The struggle for ideas has never been as crucial as it is today. We must improve and strengthen our socialist society in face of imperialism's basic strategy, which aims to erode our principles and values and weaken youth in particular. We must take our offensive to the international arena and confront with arguments and reason the anti-Cuban policies of the Yankee government and its lackeys, as well as the unsustainable and destructive consequences that neoliberal globalization inflicts on workers and the peoples of the entire world.

26. We must carry out political work that is concrete, effective, specific to each problem and audience, and demonstrated in action; work that flows from permanent contact with the masses, from an attentive and receptive ear to their opinions, suggestions, and moods; that is based on systematic and rigorous studies, on a periodic analysis of the problems and verification of the results.

27. The political and ideological work of our movement is based above all on the fact that unionized workers are not simply the principal object of the revolution's message, but its principal active subjects, its main

actors par excellence, together with working farmers and students.

28. Our conception is one of political work that is not confined to schemes of a "front" or area of work, but rather a collective priority for which every union leadership body has responsibility, first and foremost the main leaders. This work cannot be reduced to political clarification, but must focus on aspects of ideology, develop revolutionary habits and attitudes, foster a strong determination to confront and solve problems, and achieve a solid, general, and rounded culture among workers, forging them as critical subjects who are able to confront the flood of globalized pseudoculture that we are subjected to through different means.

29. This means reinforcing consciousness about our glorious history and rooting in every Cuban man and woman the values that define our national and cultural identity. Our culture, the epic story of our history, are extraordinary and enormously effective weapons in defending the values of our homeland and the revolution.

30. We value highly the role of our Revolutionary Armed Forces, which zealously and effectively guard our country and are contributing to the political education of successive generations of young future workers.

They are instilling discipline and selflessness among the new generations, training them in the use of weapons and engagement in combat, and developing their boldness, courage, tenacity, and willingness to



Militant/Argiris Malapanis

Workers at the Heroes of Moncada cigar factory in Havana, November 1994. "The political work of our movement is based above all on the fact that unionized workers are not simply the principal object of the revolution's message, but its principal active subjects, its main actors, together with working farmers and students," states Theses to be discussed at April 28-30 Cuban union congress.

ture of work and increased discipline. Such values can be forged only through organization and exacting standards.

In other countries with a long history of industrialization, such habits become ingrained through the cruel school of capitalism and the permanent threat of unemployment.

We have to rely on different levers: first and foremost, efforts to raise consciousness, workers' participation in management, the use of tested means such as the Efficiency Assemblies,¹ and increasingly linking together work results, income, and the living standards of workers and their families.

34. As Che [Guevara] taught us, voluntary labor, if it is well-organized and justified by its economic or social results, will remain a pillar of workers' communist education and requires constant attention.



Arnoldo Santos

Unionists march in Havana on May Day 1997, with signs celebrating revolutionary campaign in Bolivia led by Ernesto Che Guevara in 1966-67. CTC members are discussing need to draw on Cuba's revolutionary history as part of winning and educating the new generations to a communist perspective.

give everything for the defense of our free, independent, and sovereign nation—which the best sons and daughters of our nation forged with their blood through a century and a half of unparalleled heroism and sacrifice.

31. All unions must be prepared to carry out unflinchingly, together with all of our people, any task required for the continual strengthening of our country's defensive capacity.

32. The sustained and generous donations that workers of different sectors with access to hard currency are making to health, anticancer, and mother-infant programs are an expression of our sense of solidarity and rejection of selfish and individualistic attitudes. This movement highlights the human solidarity and revolutionary consciousness that we must continue to develop in breadth and reach.

33. We must steadily instill a deeper cul-

35. We must work systematically to create a deeper understanding of economic and legal questions, a greater sense of rational organization in everything we do, a greater ability to rely on our training and our own forces, and a deep sense of internationalist solidarity and commitment. Without all this, we cannot advance in the building of socialism in our country.

36. We need a consciousness that is not based on high-sounding proclamations, but rather is expressed in the daily fulfillment of our duty, the elimination of vices and inconsistent attitudes, strengthening vigilance, and developing in every workplace an atmosphere that makes it impossible to tolerate crime, corruption, privilege, nepotism, cronyism, and other forms of moral decay.

37. At the same time, socialism cannot forgo the goal of every man and woman having a useful job, or the objective of building a healthy society that is free from marginal

social conditions. The workforce and the union must join in the effort of attention, prevention, and social and community work that the revolution is vigorously advancing today.

38. Our people have deepened their understanding of culture as an expression of our national identity, as the enjoyment of spiritual values, and as a basic weapon in the battle for ideas in which we are engaged.

39. Our union movement unhesitatingly embraces Fidel's idea of making our people one of the most cultured in the world, and commits all its cadres, leaders, and members to the sustained effort implied in this endeavor.

40. Cuban workers, in addition to increased levels of education, have acquired a high level of political culture. This must now become part of a higher level of general culture, including education about labor, economy, history, science, art, and literature, based on the understanding of [José] Martí's aphorism that without culture there can be no freedom.²

41. Workers and the unions, especially in art and literature, science, education, information, and communications, must play a leading role in this effort.

42. Cuban culture, which is open to exchange with and enrichment by the best of universal culture, has continued to expand in significant areas in recent years. Above all, culture encompasses values, ideas, reasons, knowledge, sensibility, and moral and material realities in a society based on solidarity. Despite all the slanders and scheming against the revolution, Cuba has gained increased authority and recognition around the world. But our sworn enemy—Yankee imperialism—will try by every possible means to counterattack, and for this we must continue to prepare rapidly.

We face a war of ideas and images, in which it is necessary to act in an intelligent, calm, and timely way.

43. The University for All,³ broadcast through television and radio, is providing a large body of knowledge, information, interpretations, and arguments on questions of vital importance. The union movement must find ways to ensure that all its leaders and members fully take advantage of this

Continued on Page 10

¹ Economic efficiency assemblies are meetings in the factories and the countryside where workers discuss and make decisions on concrete measures affecting productivity in the plants and on the farms.

² José Martí, Cuba's national hero, was the central leader of the Cuban struggle for independence from Spain in the late 19th century, as well as a noted poet, essayist, and journalist. His anti-imperialist program is part of the revolutionary internationalist traditions and political heritage of the Cuban Revolution.

³ The University for All is part of a campaign to widen the availability of education both among student youth and working people of all ages. It consists of nationally televised courses on various subjects such as English, geography, and art appreciation. It is part of a multifaceted effort—which also includes promoting computer literacy, including among preschool and primary school students; a campaign to train greater numbers of grade school teachers; and other initiatives aimed at broadening access to culture and deepening political education.

'Without culture there can be no freedom'

Continued from Page 9
valuable tool.

44. The improved management system⁴ is one of our most important strategic goals, since the task is to lead state enterprises toward increased economic efficiency, while at the same time creating the objective and subjective conditions for the maximum development of socialist consciousness among the workforce.

Battle for economic efficiency

45. Approaching the economic, political, and ideological aspects as part of a single whole, we must show that socialist state enterprises can be as efficient as or more efficient than the best capitalist enterprises, and that the socialist state, which represents working people, reaffirms its leading role in conducting economic affairs.

46. The successful introduction of this new management system demands a new mentality in every workplace and by every worker in particular. Educating workers and their leaders to be able to achieve uninterrupted improvements in efficiency and competitiveness is crucial.

47. We must therefore go through a new phase of training so that workers and union cadres understand not only the technical aspects of the improved management system, but above all the social, political, and ideological importance of this far-reaching change in the management of the socialist economy.

48. The improved management system poses greater responsibilities for the union movement, and a change in mentality, structures, procedures, and methods of work become indispensable for the efforts we must carry out from now on to keep instilling in all workers a sense and attitude of collective ownership of their workplaces—in a country in which the overall wealth is the social property of the entire people.

49. Workers in the state-budgeted sector carry out work that has great social importance, and they must abide by similar standards of efficiency; their work will have a growing impact on improvements in the quality of services and administration.

Easing and expediting procedures that the population must follow requires special attention, including those that are required by the management of enterprises. Given their importance, these activities deserve adequate payment and incentives, to the extent the country has the necessary resources.

50. The unions at all levels are obligated to strive to ensure that all scientific specialties and technical innovations become fully part of the life of our workplaces and help raise economic efficiency as well as working and living conditions, in the framework of an ecologically sustainable society.

51. Under the current conditions of our development, we must rapidly improve the links between the productive and the scientific-technical sectors, as well as advance their more effective and deeper integration.

52. From a union point of view, this mission is directly related to what the Commander-in-Chief [Fidel Castro] termed a dual membership and dual responsibility. We have generalized this as "dual affiliation," which is a new method of work that must be the unambiguous responsibility not only of the union of scientists but of the other unions, especially local unions.



Militant/Argiris Malapanis

CTC Congress 1996. This year's congress will discuss centrality of the labor movement joining in an "offensive of revolutionary ideas" to politically strengthen the revolution in face of political and economic pressures from imperialism.

53. The National Association of Innovators and Efficiency Experts (ANIR)⁶ must continue to promote, support, and back the inventiveness of workers in order to increase efficiency, raise productivity, use new technology, strengthen technical discipline, and work to foster a culture of systematically applying scientific and technical methods in every job and in the workplace as a whole, which will contribute, with its enhanced strength, to the further success of the Forum of Science and Technology.

54. Increased food production in the countryside remains a basic goal of the CTC, given the large number of workers in agriculture, the direct impact of this production on the quality and quantity of food available to the population, its importance for the country's defense, what it represents as a major source of jobs, and its extraordinary role in our balance of trade.

55. The main task of the unions of farm workers, sugar workers, tobacco workers, civilian employees in the Revolutionary Armed Forces (FAR), and of the CTC as a leading and organizing body, is to help workers in state enterprises and farms and in the Basic Units of Cooperative Production (UBPC), through their efforts and cultivation of the land, realize—in a relatively brief period of time—the enormous potential productivity and yields that have not yet been developed.⁷ A basic factor in this goal is achieving a stable and full workforce.

56. Yields by area, which today are acceptable or satisfactory only for a small number of crops, are clearly the Achilles heel of our agriculture.

57. The progress of the sugar industry could be limited or slowed down if in the coming years a solution is not attained for the problem of low sugarcane yields, which not only affects the availability of raw materials for the industry but significantly raises the costs.

58. The economic problems resulting from low yields that are seen in both the sugarcane and non-sugarcane sectors of agriculture have an appreciable effect on the country's financial resources. They harm,

first and foremost, the workers of this sector, whose labor cannot be viewed as effective if the producers' income is not tied to economic results.

59. No wage compensation or subsidy, even when it provides the maximum possible protection, can substitute for the moral satisfaction and sense of social and patriotic usefulness that individuals gain from their continued and effective role as highly productive workers.

60. In recent years, the unemployment rate has continued a downward trend, but it remains a problem of concern whose solution is complex, and particularly affects the eastern provinces and some municipalities in other regions. It is uneven from one area to another and from one job to another, with some situations in which there are job vacancies and no applicants.

61. In the context of this situation, it remains necessary to keep making progress in adjusting the size of the workforce in each enterprise and in the restructuring of labor tied to the improved management system.

Modernization of any productive activity or services often means introducing techniques that expand labor productivity and lead to the elimination of a certain number of jobs. But obviously, eliminating all jobs as a result of being forced to shut down a workplace that is no longer competitive and lacks a market for its products or services would be extremely negative for the workers involved and for the national economy.

62. The union movement supports, as a general course of action, any measure that, if implemented rationally and fairly, helps develop the country and strengthen both its domestic and international financial situation. We are aware that this is the only secure, effective, and lasting way to maintain and increase the number and quality of our jobs.

63. In continuity with the policies established by our government, the 18th Congress must reaffirm the principle that no worker can be left unprotected, and that it is necessary to fight for new alternatives for jobs that are lasting, necessary, and economically viable.

64. The congress must also maintain the approach that any decision implying a reduction of the workforce must be preceded by considering all the options for relocating the available workers to useful jobs that ben-

efit the economy and guarantee them job security and income. Such a decision will require the approval of the union, the CTC, and the Ministry of Labor.

65. The union movement greatly appreciates the distance already traveled, but is aware that the decisive thing is ground we have yet to cover in order to achieve the levels of development to which we can aspire through our efforts and, as a result, better meet both the physical and broader human needs of our people.

66. We are also aware that prices in general do not yet correspond to the income levels of a large number of workers.

67. A primary duty for us is the struggle to continue tying individual incomes to work results, including for managers at different levels, and to create an appropriate relationship between the material interests and the moral motivations of our society.

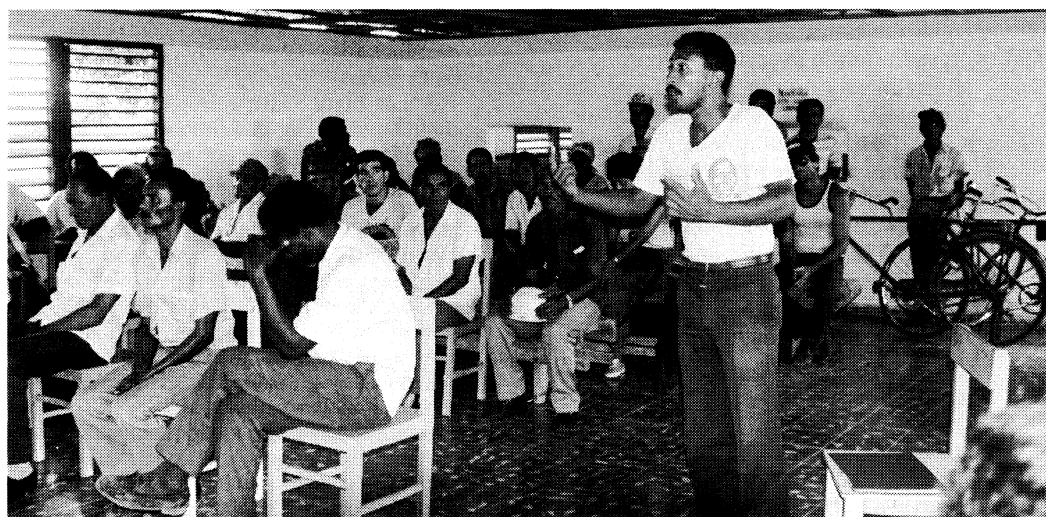
68. Toward that end, and related to the process of restoring the value of the Cuban peso, it will be necessary to develop and gradually introduce—beginning with the most dynamic branches and entities of the economy—a wage structure that maximizes income in pesos connected to increased efficiency. This will make it possible to begin to substitute, as the necessary conditions are created, the parallel forms of incentives, while raising the incomes of workers in the other branches of production, services, and the state-budgeted sector.

[To be continued]



Militant/Maggie Trowe

Child-care workers and children at Juan Alvarado Day-Care Center in Havana, November 2000. The fight by Cuban workers for economic efficiency in industries and services has the aim of maximizing resources available for social priorities.



Militant/Laura Garza

Efficiency assembly at Caimanera salt mine near Guantánamo, Cuba, in September 1994. "We must show that socialist state enterprises can be as efficient as or more efficient than the best capitalist enterprises," CTC document states.

Thousands rally in N.Y. for Palestinians' right to return

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

NEW YORK—Chanting "Hey, hey, ho, ho, occupation has got to go" and "Free Palestine," several thousand supporters of the right of Palestinian refugees to return to their homeland marched through the streets of Manhattan April 7. The protesters, which included many youth and Palestinians, were enthusiastic, spirited, and determined to press forward the decades-long fight for the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination. Others at the action were fighters for Puerto Rican rights, Native-Americans, and a group called Jews Against the Occupation.

The action was organized by Al-Awda—The Palestine Right to Return Coalition, which last September sponsored a similar national protest in Washington, D.C.

Protesters gathered across the street from the Israeli Mission to the United Nations where several speakers addressed the crowd and then marched downtown 28 blocks for a rally in Union Square park. The *Daily News* gave their "unofficial estimate" of the crowd at 5,000.

A news release issued prior to the action by Al-Awda pointed out that in addition to demanding the right of more than 5 million Palestinian refugees "to return to their properties and homes of origin," the rally "will also demonstrate support for people in the occupied territories where more than 400 Palestinians have been killed, and over 15,000 injured by Israeli occupation forces in the past six months. A third of those injured and killed are children." Similar protest actions were held in the northern Israeli city of Nazareth and Dheishe, Balata, and several Palestinian refugee camps in the occupied territories. Actions were slated for Lebanon, Syria, Australia, Canada, Italy, Japan, and Spain, according to a release issued by Al-Awda.

The rally coincided with the 53rd anniversary of the massacre of Palestinian civilians in the village of Deir Yassin, where Zionist military units murdered 254 unarmed inhabitants on April 9, 1948. The town is now part of Israel. This and other attacks by Israeli forces were designed to provoke a massive flight of Palestinians from their homes and land out of the area that was declared the state of Israel on May 15, 1948. Hundreds of thousands of Palestinians were driven into exile in this manner.

In addition to a strong presence at the protest from New York residents, participants came on buses from Washington, D.C., Philadelphia, Boston, and Chicago. Some 100 people flew in from California. Participants also came from Connecticut, New Jersey, North Carolina, Maryland, Michigan, Ohio, Virginia, Rhode Island, and Canada.

"I'm here to support the struggle of the Palestinian people, the efforts to get the right to return and live freely, and the right not to be made homeless by the Israeli government," stated Ephraim Bahar, a bus driver for the Transit Authority in Cleveland, who came to the action with the Islamic Center there.

Stepped up assaults by Israeli rulers

On the minds of many at the action were the latest stepped-up assaults by the Israeli rulers, and the importance of international solidarity with their brothers and sisters who are at the forefront of the resistance today in the occupied territories and within Israel itself.

The week prior to the action, the Israeli military razed nearly 30 homes of Palestinians living in the occupied West Bank. At the same time Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon announced plans April 5 to build another 700 houses for Jewish settlers at two locations in the West Bank.

"The settlers can do what they please and we're forbidden to build," Muhammad Salah, whose house was just razed, told a *New York Times* reporter. "How can you build trust and good relations when you destroy my house? This is terrorism," he said.

Meanwhile, Israeli helicopter gunships rocketed two Palestinian police stations in the Gaza Strip April 6 and knocked out power to thousands of homes. Israeli authorities are continuing their policy of assassinating prominent Palestinian figures.

For example, a top official of the Islamic Jihad movement, Iyad Hardan, was assassinated in the West Bank city of Jenin April 5 when a public phone exploded as he made a call. Palestinian officials said personnel in Israeli planes flying nearby detonated the hidden bomb by remote control.

The UN Commission on Human Rights in a 48-2 vote April 6 reaffirmed the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and statehood. Only the United States and Guatemala voted against the resolution. Delegates from Britain, China, France, and Russia voted in favor, while Canada abstained.

'Palestine should be free'

"I think this demonstration is wonderful," commented Jamilah Alzer, a young Palestinian participating in the New York action and currently living in Washington, D.C. "Palestine should be a free state and Jerusalem should be declared Palestinian territory, and America should cut off all aid to Israel," she emphasized.

A group of high school students with the group New Generation Palestine were some of the most enthusiastic participants in the demonstration. Ahmad Barqawi, 15, is a student at Washington Township High School in southern New Jersey, and vice president of the organization. Formed 12 years ago and currently based in Philadelphia, south Jersey, and Maryland, the group's aim "is to educate the American people about Palestine and present our side of the story," said Barqawi. "We are here to help fight for our country." A busload of some 47 people affiliated with this youth group came to the action from Philadelphia.

A number of fighters for the independence of Puerto Rico marched behind one of the largest banners in the demonstration that read, "Puerto Ricans in Solidarity with Palestine—U.S. Navy Out of Vieques. Stop the U.S.-Backed Occupation of Palestine." Also part of their contingent was a colorful banner saying, "Women for Peace and Justice for Vieques." Among those marching was longtime Puerto Rican rights fighter Rafael Cancel Miranda. "It's the same struggle, the same enemy," stated Cancel Miranda in an interview. "Palestinians are the Puerto Ricans of the Middle East and Puerto Ricans are the Palestinians of the Americas."

Cancel Miranda was also one of the featured speakers at the Union Square rally. "I feel honored to be here. Everyone who believes in dignity should be here," he stated. "We have the right to fight for our children by any means." Cancel Miranda pointed to the fact that the U.S. rulers held him in jail as a political prisoner for 28 years during which time "they tried to take the dignity out of me." He received a rousing round of applause in response to his expressions of solidarity with the Palestinian people and with the Cuban Revolution.

Dr. Mazen Al-Najjar, a Palestinian professor at the University of South Florida in Tampa who was released from U.S. prisons December 15, also addressed the rally. Al-Najjar had been jailed by U.S. authorities for three years and seven months on what the government claimed was secret evidence. Facing widespread protest, a district court judge ruled his detention violated the constitutional right to due process. Having been dealt a blow in their attack on democratic rights, Attorney General Janet Reno in January said the U.S. Justice Department would attempt to deport Al-Najjar.

"It's wonderful to see the youth are holding firm on the truth," Al-Najjar told the rally. "We have the moral high ground on this issue. We're not here to inflict oppression, but to reverse the unjust situation [of the Palestinian people]. We will keep going and insisting that the truth should be defended and upheld."

Other speakers included Palestinian activist and Columbia University professor Edward Said and Palestinian-American journalist Muna Hamzeh. A message was also read from Dr. George Habash, former secretary general of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine.



In addition to the action in New York, protests occurred in several other countries. In Australia, above, some 100 people marched April 7 from Sydney Town Hall to the Israeli Consulate to back self-determination for the Palestinian people.

"For the first time, we're seeing a grassroots movement growing in the United States around the issue of Palestinian rights," stated Mary Nazzal, 21, a leader of Turath (Heritage), a group at Columbia University in New York. "And there is a lot more potential," she added, "given the recent development occurring in the Middle East."

Lew Amore, 26, who lives in New York and identifies himself as an Italian-American, said he was "most impressed by the number of non-Arab supporters at the demonstration."

BY DIMITRIS FASFALIS

MONTREAL—An April 7 demonstration here to demand the right of Palestinian people to return to their homeland and to commemorate the April 1948 massacre in Deir Yassin drew more than 100 people.

Protesters chanted, "Quebec-Palestine: solidarity!" "No justice, no peace!" "Sharon, assassin!" and "Stop the massa-

crs!" in French, English, and Arabic as they marched from the University of Quebec to the American and Israeli consulates. Many in the demonstration carried Palestinian and Quebec flags.

The demonstration was organized by Solidarity for Palestinian Human Rights (SPHR) in collaboration with the Medical Aid for Palestine, Jewish Alliance Against the Occupation, Palestinian and Jewish Unity, and the Canadian-Palestinian Foundation. SPHR is a campus-based Montreal organization comprising all university students wanting to organize activities in solidarity with the Palestinian struggle. SPHR has committees in McGill and Concordia universities, as well as at the two French-speaking campuses, UQAM and UdeM.

Dimitris Fasfalis is a member of the Young Socialists in Montreal and a member of Solidarity for Palestinian Human Rights at the University of Montreal.

Poultry workers win struggle for a union in British Columbia

BY STEVE PENNER

VANCOUVER, British Columbia—After eight months on strike, workers scored an important victory against Superior Poultry here by forcing the company to sign a first contract with the newly organized union.

The 225 members of United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 1518 voted in the union and then went on strike to demand a contract. The company hires only immigrant workers for production jobs, most of them women.

Ramparkash Sharma, the chief shop steward, said the company "thought they could do whatever they wanted. That's why we fought for the union." Superior Poultry defeated an attempt in 1992 to organize a union, Sharma said, in which the company fired some 30 union supporters. "This time they failed. Our people were stronger than last time." The Pollon Group, which owns Superior, is the largest poultry producer in British Columbia and until now has managed to keep unions out of three of its four plants.

The 1992 fight to organize a union took place in the midst of a labor retreat that lasted until the late 1990s. In contrast, when the poultry workers went out on strike last summer, 12,000 woodworkers had just pushed back an attempt by forest companies to impose major concessions on them, and several thousand Vancouver hotel workers were on strike. UFCW members at Fletcher's Fine Foods also voted down company demands for a 40 percent wage cut and set up picket lines after being locked out by the bosses.

Jagroop Dhaliwal, a union member at Superior Poultry, stressed that the company tried to break the strike by calling in the White Knights security company from Alberta. The antilabor outfit was used in Alberta against meat packers who struck Fletcher's in 1999. "They threatened us" Dhaliwal explained. "They said, Jagroop, we know where you live. But I didn't care. I knew this was only threats."

Facing a determined walkout, the company applied for compulsory arbitration, effectively admitting defeat. The arbitrator had no choice but to impose a first contract. In her report the arbitrator explained that

although up to 60 workers crossed the picket lines, from the beginning the company was only able to carry out production "in a limited fashion. The Employer lost business and one of its major customers" especially as a result of the union's boycott campaign, the report said.

Union member Somjit Wongpim said the fight against company abuse of workers and discrimination was one of the issues in the union struggle. "They abuse employees," Wongpim said of the bosses. "They don't respect human rights. I tell them I can't do" a particularly hard job, she said. "They say they don't care. I have to do it."

Workers, the majority of whom are women with children, were also forced to work up to 14-hour days six days a week. Wongpim explained that this meant that she would either have to pay for a baby-sitter or have her husband stay home to look after the children.

The new contract says that "the company will limit overtime hours of work as far as reasonably possible." Some workers consider this to mean that overtime will now be voluntary. Wongpim said it would be up to the union to fight to limit overtime. The new contract imposes a seven-day workweek. This means that workers will be forced to work some weekends, and will work different days from one week to the next.

Dhaliwal explained that the contract itself, which was imposed by compulsory arbitration, falls far short of what the workers were fighting for. The arbitrator appointed by the Labour Relations Board, a provincial government body, admitted that her proposals were based on recognizing "the economic realities" of the company.

Dhaliwal said the pay rate is much lower than at other unionized poultry plants. There will be a modest wage increase for the lowest paid workers. Although starting pay will go up to \$8 an hour from \$7.15, wages will rise much more rapidly than before, topping out at \$10.65 after 18 months.

The company had sought to convince a layer of workers to cross the picket lines by offering them \$12 to \$14 an hour. Apart from the workers who refused to join the strike from the beginning only four others crossed the picket lines during the strike.

Cuban fighters recall April 1961 victory

Continued from Page 8

many revolutionary comrades had died, and even women and children had been killed. And they had done all this to regain their privileges and wealth. They were lying when they claimed they had come to 'save' the Cuban people from communism, as if they had ever been concerned about the welfare of the people. All they were really interested in was exploiting and oppressing them so they and their Yankee masters could live well."

Speaking after the conclusion of the U.S.-Cuban gathering on Playa Girón, Dorta remarked, "I've seen some of the foreign coverage on the conference, and some articles claim that Fidel was directing the operations from the command post at the Australia mill. But that's not accurate. He directed the combat right there on the battle front."

At Playa Girón, when Castro was inspecting some of the .50-caliber machine guns and rockets captured from the mercenaries, he turned to Captain José "Pepín" Alvarez Bravo, head of the artillery units, and asked, "Pepín, are these the weapons from the planes that were downed by the boys of the antiaircraft artillery batteries?"

"Yes, commander. Those are the ones we shot down," Alvarez Bravo replied.

"No, you didn't shoot them down—they did, the boys with their antiaircraft guns!" Castro replied, to the smiles and laughter of all.

"It was the first time I had seen Fidel so close," Abad noted. "The mercenaries were surprised to see him there, because, while their chiefs fled like cowards, our top leader was at the scene of the battle, at the side of the militiamen, soldiers, and police who fought in the battle of Girón."

Ten years later, on the anniversary of the victory at Playa Girón, Castro highlighted the example of the antiaircraft gunners in that decisive battle. From the moment the first counterrevolutionary air attacks took place, he pointed out, "nobody was afraid, nobody panicked. At once they replied vigorously, courageously, overwhelmingly." He added,

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

ILLINOIS

Chicago

Celebrate 40th Anniversary of the Victory at Playa Girón. Speaker: Joel Britton, National Committee, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., April 20, 7:30. Reception: 6:30 p.m. 1212 N. Ashland, 2nd Floor. Donation: \$5. Tel: (773) 342-1780.

MINNESOTA

St. Paul

Lessons from Cuba: The Inevitability of Revolutionary Class Battles in the United States. Speaker: Joel Britton, National Committee, Socialist Workers Party. Sun., April 22, 2:00 p.m. Reception 1:00 p.m. 1569 Sherburne Ave. Tel: (651) 644-6325.

NEW JERSEY

Newark

Stop Threats Against Cuba—What's Behind Washington's Aggression. Fri., April 20, 7:30 p.m. 506 Springfield Ave. Tel: (973) 643-3341.

NEW YORK

Garment District

Defending Women's Right to Choose Abortion Today. Speaker: Debbie Lazar, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., April 13, 7:30 p.m. 545 8th Ave., 14th Floor. Tel: (212) 695-7358.

Upper Manhattan

Defend China's Sovereignty! End Washington's Threats! Speaker: Craig Honts, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., April 13, 7:30 p.m. 540 West 165th Street. Tel: (212) 740-4611.

AUSTRALIA

Sydney

Defend China's Sovereignty! End Washington's Threats! Speaker: Ron Poulsen, Communist League. Sun., April 22, 4:00 p.m. 1st Floor, 176 Redfern St., Redfern. Donation: \$4. Tel: (02) 9690 1533.

NEW ZEALAND

Auckland

Pathfinder was Born with the October Revolution. Celebrate opening of new Pathfinder bookshop and contribute to international fund appeal for Pathfinder. Sat., April 21, 7:00 p.m. Suite 3, 7 Mason Avenue, Otahuhu. Tel: (09) 276-8885.



Ministry of Revolutionary Armed Forces
Cuban combatants in battlefield during April 1961 U.S.-organized invasion at Bay of Pigs firing a *cuatro bocas*, four-barreled antiaircraft artillery piece. The gunners who fought in the battle were mostly 15, 16, or 17 years old.

"Many of the gunners were 15-, 16-, and 17-year-old youths who had never before been attacked by a plane. They were not veterans. They were raw recruits; it was the first time they had fired. Yet they vied with each other for a chance at the guns. It was emulation: Who would get the gun? Who was firing more accurately? There was a tremendous enthusiasm." The same response marked the fighting spirit of the Cuban soldiers throughout the battle, Castro said.

"There was not a single desertion under fire among the young soldiers of our antiaircraft units," Dorta noted with pride.

After the victory, Abad's battery returned to the Granma base, and later was reassigned to the Rebel Army bases in Havana at La Cabaña and El Morro fortresses.

In October 1961, Manuel Abad joined the literacy campaign. He was designated head of a literacy brigade in Calabazar de Sagua, Las Villas province. After the successful completion of the literacy drive, he studied agricultural accounting, while continuing to receive military training.

Dorta remained in the Rebel Army, which became the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Cuba. During the October 1962 "missile" crisis, in which Washington, in its drive against the Cuban Revolution, brought the world to the brink of a nuclear war, he was assigned to the defense of the Santa Clara military airport.

In 1973 Dorta was part of a mission to Vietnam to study the experiences of the Vietnamese antiaircraft units, whose effective-

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AUSTRALIA

Sydney: 1st Flr, 176 Redfern St., Redfern

ness and courage during the U.S. war were legendary. In 1983-84 he joined with other Cuban volunteer combatants in Angola to help defend the African nation from the U.S. imperialist-backed attack by the apartheid regime in South Africa.

Today, both Enrique Dorta and Manuel Abad are among the many former Girón combatants who are active in the Association of Combatants of the Cuban Revolution. "We talk to young people about our experiences in the revolution. We try to explain to them the importance of knowing our history. Today that is very important," Abad told us.

Both Dorta and Abad were pleased to see the new book by Pathfinder, *Playa Girón/ Bay of Pigs: Washington's First Military Defeat in the Americas*. "I'm going to start reading it as soon as I get home from work," Abad said with a grin.

U.S. students start training in Cuba

Continued from Page 7

opportunity to study medicine under the program in Cuba.

The students, who are not fluent in Spanish, will study that language before starting their medical training.

U.S. State Department officials said they have no objections to the program, but left unclear whether the students will need to revalidate their studies in order to become licensed upon their return to the United States. The State Department, however, rejected Cuba's proposal to send its own doctors to working-class communities in the United States as part of the program.

—CALENDAR—

MICHIGAN

Detroit

Rally to Defend the Charleston 5 Dockworkers. Speaker: Ken Riley, International Longshoremen's Association Local 1422. Sat., April 21, 5:30 p.m. UAW Local 22 Hall, 4300 Michigan Ave. Tel: (313) 680-5508.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

March for Women's Lives. Sun., April 22. Assemble: 11 a.m. Senate Park. March: 12 Noon Step-Off. Rally: 1 p.m. near Capitol. Sponsored by the National Organization for Women. For more information, call (202) 628-8669.

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Be well—A third of California hospitals are vulnerable to collapse in a major earthquake. More than



Harry Ring

half of Los Angeles area hospitals are at risk.

They're lucky customers didn't sue—"Books on how to get rich quick in the stock market, so popular this time last year, are piling up at bookstores and publishers are taking a hard hit"—News item.

A boss is a boss is a—England's post office was scored for delivering some 1.9 million first-class letters late each day.

According to the *Times* of London, a spokesperson blamed the delays on "railway disruptions and unofficial strikes at depots." If such strikes and "disruptions" occurred on a daily basis it would be quite a testimonial to working conditions.

Shifting perspective—For the first time since Vietnam, members of the Marine Corps are getting freshly designed camouflage outfits. They will feature new computer-designed color schemes, etc. The principal addition will be knee and elbow padding. The brass hats believe coming wars are more likely

be fought on urban pavements.

Almost as decayed as capitalism—The U.S. infrastructure is crumbling, says the American Society of Civil Engineers. A third of the major roads are in poor condition or a notch above poor. Seventy percent are jammed during peak periods.

The aviation system is headed towards gridlock. In the past decade, airport capacity increased 1 percent. In the same period, traffic swelled 37 percent. Three-quarters of school buildings are substandard and the school system is unable to meet the needs of pupils.

Avoiding disruption—"Massive pay raises for MPs [members of Parliament] and [cabinet] ministers

are to be postponed by [Labour prime minister] Tony Blair until after the general elections to avoid a backlash from the unions and the public."—The *Times*, London

Telling it like it is—Now back in Paris to face trial on fraud charges, ex-con Phillipe Hababou had a heady five-year fling as a member of the inner circle of U.S. Sen. Robert ("strangle Cuba") Torricelli, plus a photo op with then-prez Clinton. Says Hababou: "I didn't realize how easy it was to buy or get close to an American politician. When money is involved, they don't check anything."

A senator's gotta have wheels—"Washington—A major political donor has told authorities

that he put money down to help Sen. Robert Torricelli buy a luxury car during his 1996 Senate campaign, but that the New Jersey Democrat scuttled the deal, according to law enforcement officials and lawyers."—Associated Press

The 'new' economy—In the last 16 months some 65,000 dot.commers have lost their jobs. This past February, 50 of the 250 employees at Infospace.com were fired on 15 minutes notice and had to make appointments to clean out their desks.

At USatWork.com, 70 of 120 employees were booted out. Those spared, were herded to the basement in a freight elevator, the rest were told to pack up and get out. (The company is now also gone).

Answering rulers' attacks on abortion rights

Printed below are excerpts from the pamphlet *Abortion is a Woman's Right!* Copyright © 1985 by Pathfinder, reprinted by permission.

BY PAT GROGAN

On January 22, 1973, women won their most important victory in decades.

The U.S. Supreme Court, in *Roe vs. Wade*, ruled that women had the constitutional right to have abortions. The ruling legalized abortion through the first twenty-four weeks of pregnancy and struck down all laws that

Congress cut off funds even in cases of rape and incest.

In October 1984, Congress once again denied abortion funding for victims of rape and incest.

Since the Hyde Amendment was passed, thirty-six states have cut off state funding for abortions.

There were 180 incidents of violent attacks by right-wing foes of abortion rights on abortion clinics as of November 1984. This includes 20 arsons and fire bombings.

Women seeking abortions are harassed, threatened, and called "murderers" by "right-to-lifers" who try to create an atmosphere of fear and intimidation at abortion clinics. They are the shock troops of a broader assault on abortion rights.

The steps taken toward equality by both the women's rights movement and the civil rights movement have strengthened the entire working class in its ability to struggle against the employers.

In order to lay the basis for ever deeper attacks against the rights and living standards of the working class—and as part of the preparation for full-scale imperialist war in Central America—the ruling class must pit worker against worker, using racist and sexist prejudices to undermine the unity and strength of the working class.

The ruling class ideological offensive is aimed at undermining the powerful idea that *women should have equal rights*. It is aimed at convincing both men and women that a woman's place is in the home, and that the family, not the government, should bear the cost of caring for children, the sick, and the elderly.

It is aimed at justifying lower pay for women who work and making unemployment of women more acceptable.

Leading the pack of the opponents of abortion rights has been New York's Cardinal John O'Connor.

In a major speech delivered on October 15, 1984, entitled "Human Lives, Human Rights," O'Connor laid out many of the arguments in the antiabortion, anti-women's rights arsenal. These arguments need to be rebutted—forcefully and publicly—by supporters of women's rights.

The theme of O'Connor's speech was the argument that abortion is a social evil and that fighting against abortion rights is progressive—like fighting against racism or for the rights of the elderly.

O'Connor put an equal sign between abortion and his list of social ills: homelessness, mistreatment of the elderly, drug abuse, pornography, sexual exploitation, child abuse, racism, and war.

By linking abortion to genuine social wrongs and injustices, O'Connor tries to make his reactionary campaign against women's rights more acceptable to the millions of working people who, in their majority, support legal abortion. He tries to paint it up as a new "civil rights" movement.

But abortion is not an injustice—it is a basic human right. The right of women to control their own bodies—which is what is at stake in the fight over legal abortion—is an elementary precondition for the liberation of women from the oppression they suffer as a sex.

Women's liberation and civil rights fighters stand together against inequality, discrimination, and exploitation. Both immeasurably strengthen the capacity of the labor movement to resist the current employer-



Women's rights supporters rally in Trenton, New Jersey, June 14, 1999, to protest a parental-notification bill. The rulers' "ideological offensive is aimed at undermining the powerful idea that women should have equal rights," says pamphlet.

class offensive.

Abortion is not murder. It is a simple medical procedure that terminates a pregnancy. Abortion is key to allowing women to decide whether and when to bear children.

Bearing a child affects all the other aspects and decision of a woman's life—her ability to get an education, get a better job—or any job. As long as women are vulner-

able to unwanted pregnancies, breaking down economic and social barriers on the job, in education, and in the home becomes a much more difficult task.

Of course, legalized abortion cannot solve all the problems facing women. But the right to choose is the most fundamental step toward women being able to achieve full equality.

—25 AND 50 YEARS AGO—



April 23, 1976

Thirty-two students and teachers were arrested by New York City cops April 12 at the main building of Hostos Community College in the South Bronx.

The building has been occupied by demonstrators since March 25, when more than 500 people, organized by the Community Coalition to Save Hostos, had taken over the facility as a protest against the city's plan to close down the school.

Hostos is unique among the twenty colleges of the city university system. It is the only bilingual college on the East Coast of the United States....

It opened its doors in 1970, as a by-product of the successful open-admissions struggle waged by Black and Puerto Rican students a year earlier. It was named after Eugenio Maria de Hostos, an outstanding leader of the Puerto Rican independence movement in the late 1800s.

Hostos is the first college in the City University of New York designed to serve the needs of a ghetto—the South Bronx, an impoverished Puerto Rican neighborhood.

More than 90 percent of the students are Blacks, Puerto Ricans or other minorities—the highest percentage of any CUNY campus.

About half of the 2,600 students are enrolled in special courses teaching English as a second language. In addition, more than sixty classes—ranging from calculus to psychology—are conducted in Spanish, so that students do not have to postpone their education until they can handle the subject in English.



April 23, 1951

Washington is concealing from the American people the true figures of U.S. casualties in Korea. The losses are almost double the misleading figures given out by the Defense Department.

The actual toll is "considerably more than 100,000," reveals Hansen W. Baldwin, the well-informed military analyst of the *N.Y. Times*.

"Our total battle casualties—now approximately 60,000 killed, wounded, prisoners, and missing since the Korean war started," wrote Baldwin on April 12, "probably would be swollen to considerably more than 100,000 if actual casualties such as motor accidents and plane crashes, frostbite, disease, etc., were included."

A GI who has had his feet frozen and amputated as a result of being exposed to sub-zero weather in an open fox-hole is not considered a "battle casualty" in the Army records.

Baldwin observes that "one hundred thousand total casualties in nine months of war is a sizable price to pay for a limited conflict in which no decision...is possible." If we accept General Omar Bradley's figures of 250,000 U.S. ground troops in Korea, Army casualties from all causes in nine months are at the frightful rate of more than one out of every three men.

Combined battle casualties of all UN forces were reported on March 31 as 228,941. The South Koreans have been hit hardest, with 168,652 casualties.

Miami spy trial: attack on rights

The current federal trial in Miami of five people accused by the FBI of spying for the Cuban government is not only an attempt by the U.S. government to smear the Cuban Revolution and its supporters. It is also a serious attack on the rights of working people and others in this country.

One defendant, Gerardo Hernández, is being charged with “conspiracy to commit murder,” which carries a maximum sentence of life imprisonment.

The U.S. government has used these extreme charges and threatened sentences to try to break the defendants and gain their collaboration. Of the 10 individuals arrested in 1998, one person pleaded guilty, is now serving a four-year sentence, and has agreed to testify against the five currently on trial. Another four individuals subsequently pleaded guilty.

In a notorious trial in 1951, Julius and Ethel Rosenberg were charged with espionage and faced the death penalty. U.S. authorities hoped to break the Rosenbergs and use them to go after others as part of the antilabor witch-hunt at that time. Their trial was used as a warning to others opposing U.S. government policy or assaults by the employers. But the Rosenbergs did not crack, and they were executed.

The government’s “conspiracy to commit murder” charge is based on the allegation that Hernández provided Cuban authorities with flight plans for pilots belonging to the right-wing group Brothers to the Rescue, who on February 24, 1996, carried out deliberate provocations that violated Cuban airspace. Two of the three planes were downed by the Cuban air force and their pilots died, although their chief, José Basulto, was careful to avoid being shot down.

In the ongoing trial, the government case rests on supposed evidence provided by the FBI after repeatedly breaking into private homes—an attack on constitutional rights. The “evidence” consists of electronic files that the FBI

claims are copies from hard drives of computers in the residences of the defendants.

The credibility of the FBI’s “evidence” will be questioned by anyone familiar with the political police agency’s long record of frame-ups and fabrications, such as doctored tapes and other phony evidence they have used previously to frame Puerto Rican independence supporters, among others.

The big-business media has done its part by convicting the defendants as “Castro’s spies” in their “news” articles and opinion columns.

If the U.S. rulers get away with these assaults on rights, they will use similar tactics against others—from striking unionists to protesters against police brutality to opponents of U.S. policy toward Cuba.

The spy trial is also part of the continuing U.S. attack on the Cuban Revolution. Washington and its supporters are seeking to smear Cuba for the 1996 shootdown of the Brothers to the Rescue planes. In the trial, however, the defense has refuted some of the U.S. government’s lies and provided authoritative testimony that the counterrevolutionary pilots were six miles inside Cuba’s airspace when they were downed and that they were given repeated warnings from Cuban authorities.

Revolutionary Cuba has won wide respect among working people worldwide for taking decisive action to defend its sovereignty. Since the shootdown, the U.S.-based rightists have been much less eager to intrude into Cuban airspace. And Cuba has effectively shown that Washington is the real criminal—providing a base of operations for right-wing terrorist outfits, continuing its 40-year-long trade embargo against the island, and other acts of aggression.

What the U.S. rulers cannot reconcile themselves to—and what workers and farmers everywhere can draw strength from—is the fact that Cuba’s working people refuse to get on their knees, and instead continue to defend their political power and gains of their socialist revolution.

Compensation for miners now!

The callous disregard shown for uranium industry workers by the U.S. government, which has allowed the trust fund to run out that had been set up to compensate those whose health is damaged or destroyed by nuclear radiation, is consistent with the U.S. rulers’ contempt for the lives of all working people.

Since nuclear weapons development began during World War II as part of Washington’s drive to build and use a lethal arsenal aimed at the toiling masses around the world, thousands of miners and other workers and their families, workers in uniform, and entire communities have been exposed to nuclear radiation from weapons production and testing and nuclear power plants, as well as radioactive waste.

Washington and the employers consistently covered up the danger nuclear weapons and energy production posed to the health and safety of working people. It is an example of what the rulers are willing to do to safeguard their profits.

The article in this week’s issue describing how the mine owners never informed the miners and their families of the dangers inherent in handling and working around uranium echoes revelations last year, forced out in the open by workers’ lawsuits, of how employees and their families at a federal uranium processing plant in Kentucky

operated by Lockheed Martin and Martin Marietta were unknowingly exposed for decades to large amounts of uranium-contaminated smoke and air. The land and water around the plant were also contaminated.

The entire labor movement and its allies need to support the fight being waged by uranium miners for full benefit payments. That same solidarity needs to be extended to coal miners fighting for black lung benefits, and to those fighting for safe conditions on the job, whether in the mines, packinghouses, or on the farm. The logic of the these struggles is the demand for guaranteed lifetime government-funded medical care, adequate social security pensions, disability insurance, and other social entitlements for all.

The workers movement must also oppose the imperialists’ drive to militarily dominate the workers and farmers of the world, which is the main reason so much uranium is mined and processed. We must call for eliminating Washington’s entire war machine and the shutting down all nuclear power plants now.

Capitalism’s course toward nuclear war, environmental destruction, and abuse of workers’ health and safety poses the need for a revolutionary alliance of workers and farmers, the only social force capable of taking power and stopping the capitalist rulers’ drive toward war.

Cuban youth in New England

Continued from Page 6

ban Revolution, welcomed the Cuban youth. Miranda noted that in the mid-1950s when Fidel Castro visited New York he promoted the Moncada program, the political program of the revolutionary forces in Cuba grouped in the July 26 movement.

Miranda noted that some in the United States at the time said Castro “must have suffered a blow to the head” for promoting the program that called for land reform and deep-going measures in the interests of workers and farmers in Cuba. But it wasn’t just a pipe-dream, Miranda ex-

plained. The Cuban Revolution implemented the Moncada program.

Miranda ended by turning to the Cuban youth and saying, “You have very big responsibilities for Cuba and for all of humanity. I wish you success. And you should know that you can count on us here to always be by your side defending the Cuban Revolution and demanding an end to the embargo.”

Supporters of the tour organized food and beverages for the evening event and everyone enjoyed a dance after the speakers had concluded their remarks.

Conflict shows threat to China

Continued from Page 3

back into a vast colony and thereby help alleviate the crisis of world capitalism.

China’s defensive weapons

China’s military is mainly defensive and its nuclear weapons capabilities are mostly regional. China has fewer than 20 intercontinental ballistic missiles, which use liquid fuel, meaning they cannot be fired on short notice. Nor do they have precise targeting capability as do Washington’s. The ability to counter and neutralize this relatively small nuclear arsenal is one of the hoped-for goals of Washington’s antimissile program.

Beijing acquired four Russian Kilo-class submarines for operations in nearby waters, hoping to deter Washington from dispatching carrier battle groups to the region. China has few modern fighters among its 4,000 warplanes, one ship that can transport munitions, and two supply vessels that can carry fuel and water to ships. Its military has the capacity to move about 10,000 troops and little capability to launch an amphibious assault even across the Taiwan Strait—hardly a force that could retake the province.

While waging a propaganda offensive against China and in defense of its right to continue the spy flights, Washington had little in the way of serious economic threats it could make against its adversary in this dispute. Various government officials said that they would work to oppose China’s entry into the World Trade Organization and Beijing’s bid to host the 2008 Olympics if the crew and plane were not immediately returned. Many in the U.S. capitalist class though sought to play down these threats, opting for now to continue to seek openings in China for development of export industries, trade, and investment.

The bureaucratic layer that rules China is not interested in a conflict with Washington, as it seeks to integrate China into the world capitalist economy, maintaining its policy of political accommodation to imperialism while carrying out repression of working-class struggles in China as part of defending their privileges and power.

For example, the Chinese government banned demonstrations against Washington around the plane collision despite popular indignation at the events. More than 50 universities and colleges have requested permission to demonstrate against the U.S. government’s provocation. Instead, the Education Ministry issued a directive to faculty and students instructing them to “not take to the street.”

“In the last few years China’s been making too many concessions,” said Jian Yi, a student in Beijing, according to a *New York Times* report. “The government’s primary foreign policy goal has been good relations with the United States.” He added that many people in the country are still angry over Washington’s bombing of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade two years ago.

Last week the *Militant* echoed Chinese officials who presented the emergency landing of the U.S. spy plane as a violation of China’s sovereignty. But working people should have no objection to a plane in a Mayday situation making an emergency landing at the nearest airport to avoid death or injury of its crew. At the same time Chinese government officials have the right to hold the crew for questioning as part of investigating the incident.

Rochelle strikers win wage increase

Continued from front page

in such packing centers as Austin, Minnesota, to organize plant-gate collections to further strengthen the fight.

At a solidarity picnic attended by 100 people last weekend, workers pointed to the contributions, a food bank set up by strikers, and the union hardship fund as important signs of union solidarity. A March 29 press release from the local said, “The hardship fund will assist workers with critical bills or other life-sustaining expenses during the strike.”

Pedro Vargas, a worker for six years at Rochelle Foods, pointed to the importance of such solidarity. “It meant a lot to all of us on the picket line to know that other UFCW members cared about our struggle. Our lines stayed strong and morale was high, thanks to the strong support from the community and our union brothers and sisters.”

Workers on the picket line pointed to the fight against humiliating treatment by the bosses, pressure by the company to work when injured, and speedup on the job as important aspects of their struggle. Most of the production workers at the plant are Latino.

In a news release, Bill Schmitz, UFCW vice president and packinghouse director, said, “Packinghouse workers across the country can look to the Rochelle workers as role models for solidarity, courage, and commitment.” The strikers had maintained spirited picketing at the plant 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Arrin Hawkins and Joel Britton are meat packers and members of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 100A in Chicago.

Textile workers in Australia picket closed plant for back pay

BY DOUG COOPER

SYDNEY, Australia—"We're not going anywhere until we get what's ours," said Jamie, one of 60 members of the textile workers union picketing the entrance to Grenadier Coating. The bosses closed the small factory March 8 and sacked all the workers with 10 minutes' notice.

The workers, who coat fabric for use in blinds and curtains, quickly organized themselves to picket, contacted the Textile, Clothing and Footwear Union (TCFUA), and have maintained a 24-hour blockade at the doors ever since, according to shop steward Michelle Booth.

The workers are owed some A\$650,000 (US\$325,000) in entitlements, including wages, sick pay, and superannuation (pension) contributions. Ori, a worker originally from New Zealand, said the TCFUA had not received union dues deducted from workers' wages for some time and one worker found out that the child support payments deducted from his wages had not been sent to his ex-wife and children. Grenadier bosses Tana and Lessel Davies placed the company into voluntary administration on March 6. The company is reportedly more than A\$10 million in debt.

Workers said that Giles Woodgate, the administrator, has repeatedly tried to cajole them to come back to work without pay to finish processing the remaining stock, while at the same time offering to pay out only a fraction of the workers' entitlements. "He's paying Tana and Lessel Davies every day in there," Ori remarked. "They drive here in that flashy MG we bought them last year by giving them 100 percent effort. They have a \$1.5 million home. Since they put us on four days on, four days off last year they've been pleading they were broke. Our attitude is 'nothing in, nothing out,' and 100 percent is the only realistic figure," she said.

The TCFUA members have received widespread support and solidarity. Wharfies (dockworkers), tug crews, and linesmen at nearby Port Botany, all members of the Maritime Union of Australia, have taken up collections and visited the picket line in ones and twos at all hours to drop off food and soft drink donations. Local businesses have contributed food.

A delegation of six laid-off production workers from the Speedo swimsuit factory in Windsor visited the picket line March 21 to exchange experiences. The entire production and cutting workforce at Speedo, the internationally known swimwear maker, lost their jobs in early March but did receive their full entitlements, including redundancy (unemployment) pay. The workers had just come from a hearing in the Industrial Relations Commission on their demand for Speedo to pay for retraining.

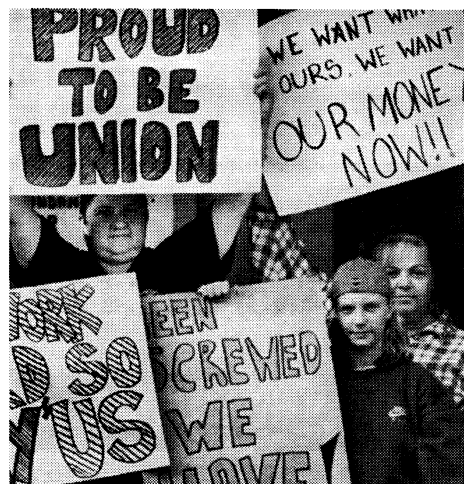
Later that day, eight Indian stonemasons who toiled on the construction of a Hindu temple in the Sydney suburb of Helenburgh under slave-like conditions for the last three years, arrived for a game of cricket. They were brought to the picket by construction union organizers. The stonemasons are fac-

ing deportation, pending the outcome of an investigation, and are receiving financial support from the union in the meantime. The match ended with a draw, according to Booth. The Grenadier workforce is very multinational, with immigrants from the Pacific, South Asia, and New Zealand who worked alongside others born in Australia.

Robert Carr, the state Labor premier, has visited the picket line on more than one occasion. The factory is located in his electorate. In response to Grenadier failing to meet its legal responsibilities to pass on child support payments and pay superannuation, Carr told the workers, "I would assume if there is evidence of fraudulent activity that the attorney general will take the appropriate steps."

In another development, 28 picketing workers in Sydney returned to work April 2 after being locked out for almost six weeks by Mirotone. The industrial paint company backed down on most of its demands such as extending the workweek from 35 to almost 39 hours. The union agreed that two workers in Sydney and one in Brisbane in the tint section would be hired on individual contracts at the longer hours without rostered days off. A breakfast barbecue was organized by the Liquor, Hospitality and Miscellaneous Workers Union as the 28 workers reentered the factory.

Doug Cooper is a member of the Maritime Union of Australia. Ron Poulsen contributed to this article.



Union textile workers and their families in Sydney, Australia, blockade entrance to Grenadier Coating plant, demanding A\$650,000 in back wages, sick pay, unemployment benefits, and pension contributions owed them by the company, which closed its doors with 10 minutes' notice March 8. "We're not going anywhere until we get what's ours," said one worker.

Pennsylvania march demands action on gas spill

BY BETH FINEAS

HAZLETON, Pennsylvania—More than 150 residents here marched through their neighborhood March 26, protesting government inaction in dealing with a 10-year-old fuel spill that continues to send cancer-causing vapors into homes in the Laurel Gardens area. Organized by the Group Against Gas, the marchers carried signs reading "No more testing—Buy out Now!", "EPA—Playing God With Our Lives," "Prisoner of Washington," and "EPA are Liars."

March organizers explained the evening event would have been a candlelight march, except for a 1996 Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) document that warned against open flames in the gas spill area. So the spirited marchers carried flashlights, chanting "Too little, too late," and "EPA go home!"

Since the early 1990s a plume of gasoline and fuel oil has been spreading through the soil and an underground mine tunnel beneath at least 400 homes in the affected area. The EPA estimates at least 50,000 gallons of fuel leaked from underground storage tanks at Tranguch Tire Service, Inc. and three other gas stations. The spill has been releasing toxic fumes containing benzene, toluene, MTBE, and ethylbenzene into homes in the neighborhood.

In 1999 resident John Salata died of leukemia, a cancer that benzene can cause. Marchers stopped in front of Salata's former residence to hear remarks from Robert Stevens, Hazleton city councilman and a leader of Group Against Gas. "Ci [Salata] would want us to do what we're doing," Stevens said referring to the fight for a government buyout and relocation of residents in the affected area. "We have to make the state and federal government aware that they can't put a value on lives," he said.

While residents have been calling for a state or federal buyout, the Environmental Protection Agency has been stalling. In a document released March 14, Stephen Jarvela, EPA chief on-scene coordinator, said that many of the 400 homes in the area aren't affected by the spill. "The benzene

levels that have been found in the homes are low enough for residents to continue living in them while remediation takes place.... EPA's position is that the site can be cleaned up," the document states.

But neighborhood resident Pat Tomsho explained that the air samples taken by EPA vary day to day depending on weather and other conditions. "In some cases benzene levels have been higher after the installation of sewer vent traps in 224 homes within the spill area," Tomsho said. Meanwhile the underground plume continues to move, endangering an ever larger area.

Following the march, more than 250 people crowded into the Crusade Baptist Church for the regular meeting of Group Against Gas. One item on the agenda was a letter from local oncologist Dr. Paul Roda to the Pennsylvania Department of Health.

Roda wrote, "Last year alone, our practice diagnosed four patients with MDS [myelodysplasia] who live in this neighborhood. This month alone, we diagnosed an additional two patients with this hematologic malignancy."

"Benzene has long been recognized as a marrow toxin with a significant risk of MDS and leukemia in those exposed to this agent," Roda stated. "Even if the contamination could be removed tomorrow (and cleanup is likely to take years), inhabitants of this region will remain at risk for MDS for another two decades."

Residents at the meeting vowed to continue the fight for the buyout and relocation, as well as cleanup of the gas spill. As one woman put it, "It's not about money, it's our lives and health and our children's future."

Meat packers at Fletcher's return to work



Militant/John Steele

Meat packers at Fletcher's Fine Foods in Vancouver, British Columbia, locked out since August 19, 2000, discussed mediator's proposal April 8. They voted by a 2-to-1 margin to accept proposal and return to work. Manuel Medeiros, who works in the kitchen and has 17 years seniority, said, "I'm really proud of our people on the picket line. We put up one hell of a fight. People are stronger. We're more a family now because of what happened in the last eight months."

LETTERS

Civil War facts

I was glad to see that protests forced the city of Selma to remove a bust of Nathan Bedford Forrest, the racist "butcher of Ft. Pillow" and later the central figure in the terrorist Ku Klux Klan during Reconstruction.

Your article notes that Forrest was defeated at Selma in April 1865 by U.S. Gen. James Wilson. That's true, but its reference to Wilson as "part of Gen. William Sherman's March to the Sea" is mistaken.

Sherman's 62,000 troops, along with tens of thousands of former slaves, marched to Savannah in the fall of 1864. Wilson's cavalry, meanwhile, operated in northern Alabama and middle Tennessee.

Like all U.S. forces in the western theatre, they were under Sherman's overall command. But it was in a different campaign, four months later, that Wilson's 13,000

horse soldiers moved south to defeat Forrest and raid western Georgia.

Wilson's troops occupied several Georgia cities and, as the Confederacy disintegrated, arrested its executive officers, Jefferson Davis and Alexander Stephens. General Wilson was 27 years old at the time. Steve Marshall Marietta, Georgia

Solidarity with China

The U.S. spy plane violating China's sovereignty is a deliberate provocation. The U.S. capitalist empire is rightly humiliated before the world, caught in its web of lies.

The dignity of the sovereign peoples should never be allowed to be compromised by the arrogance of the imperial U.S. Empire. Solidarity with the Peoples Republic of China.

E. Craig San Jose, California

Hospitals' power cut off

Nearly 200 hospitals and other emergency services in Northern California recently learned they are no longer considered "essential customers" by Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E). "Essential customers" are considered those who are deemed vital due to the public service they provide.

The *San Francisco Chronicle* explained that PG&E "rethought" their list of outage exemptions and decided to implement a 1980 Public Utilities Commission ruling allowing power outages to hospitals with less than 100 beds or to any public service facility that owned a backup generator. Ironically, state law requires most hospitals to have a source of backup power.

An administrator at a hospital in Castro Valley, California, explained that a recent blackout at the medical facility "came as a surprise... (we) believed we were exempt until it

hit." A representative from St. Rose Hospital explained, "They changed our status and didn't notify us." The California Healthcare Association, which represents California hospitals, labeled PG&E's new policy "dangerous" and called for its reversal.

A spokeswoman for the group explained, "Backup generators were never intended to be used in that capacity. They were always intended to be used in a true disaster... provide (electricity) to the most critical areas."

Shirley Peña Albany, California

Strike in Indonesia

The struggle by workers at the Shangri-La hotel in Jakarta, mentioned in the April 9 *Militant*, still continues. After more than three months on strike the workers are determined to win a new contract, including pay increases, shorter

hours, and menstruation leave for women employees.

The strikers, who are members of the Serikat Mandiri Shangri-La union, told me that they face intimidation and violence from the hotel managers, who also organize replacements to do their work. The police have arrested strikers, and have collaborated with the hotel's own security officers. The workers say that the government Ministry of Manpower has sided with the employers.

Teguh Wienarto Jakarta, Indonesia

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of interest to working people.

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.

Uranium miners fight gov't for funds

BY MARION RUSSELL
AND JEREMY ROSE

CORTEZ, Colorado—The U.S. government has allowed the trust fund set up to compensate uranium workers and those who were downwind of nuclear testing to run out of money. Some 90 former miners and others from throughout the Southwest gathered here on March 17 to support passage of an \$84 million emergency funding package placed before the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate by lawmakers from states in the Southwest.

Ed Brickey, who is one of the organizers of the event and chair of the Western States RECA Reform Coalition, spoke with *Militant* reporters in Grand Junction, Colorado. RECA is the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act of 1990.

Like his father, Brickey worked most of his life in Colorado's uranium mines. He grew up in Uravan, Colorado, a town condemned in the 1980s by the Colorado Department of Public Health and leveled because of radioactive contamination.

RECA established one-time payments of up to \$100,000 to miners or their families and smaller amounts to people who lived downwind from nuclear test sites in Nevada. Compensation payments began in 1992 and as of February amounted to \$244 million going to 3,302 people. About the same number were denied compensation because they lacked required records.

Last year, Congress added an amendment relaxing requirements for the radiation compensation program—just after the fund ran out of money. It also extended payments to sick uranium mill workers and ore haulers.

Mining and milling release radon gas

Thousands of uranium miners are sick or dying mostly from lung cancer and other lung ailments. Uranium, a radioactive substance used in nuclear bombs and nuclear power plants, exists in rocks, which must be mined, broken up, and milled. This process releases radioactive radon gas, which decays rapidly to form isotopes that can accumulate in the lungs when inhaled.

"I mined for 12 years at the Union Carbide mine in Gateway, Colorado," Henry Blackwater, who is Navajo, told the *Militant*. Blackwater has filed a compensation claim with the U.S. government for health problems arising from working as an underground uranium miner.

Two of his brothers, Ray and Husky, died from illnesses related to working for many years in the uranium mines. Husky died in his 40s after 25 years underground, while Ray lived until his late 60s, but had less time in at the mine. Blackwater also believes his



Soldiers watch cloud from open air nuclear bomb explosion in a 1952 test in Nevada. Federal government has allowed a fund, set up to provide compensation for uranium miners and to people who lived downwind from such nuclear tests, to run out of money.

wife died as a result of handling his work clothes and from being exposed to uranium dust and tailings in the community near the mine where he worked. He told the *Militant* that gravel from the uranium mine was spread around his house and the children played in it.

"The mine owners never told us about the dangers of uranium," Blackwater said. Miners would drill holes in the hard rock face to prepare for blasting. Dust created by the drilling process was in the air and got all over workers' heads and clothes. The drilling machines were not equipped to suction dust into filtered compartments as is required in mines today. "After we blasted," he said, "there would be a big cloud of dust and we'd have to let it settle until the next morning to get the ore."

Anna Rosa Blackwater added, "My father mined for 30 to 35 years in different uranium mines. We went with him into the mine where we played and drank the water seeping out of the rocks. We also ate his leftover lunch and washed his clothes. We didn't know it was dangerous. My dad died of cancer. A lot of people died from that," she said.

Miners left with IOUs

Stanley Brewer, an underground uranium miner for 35 years, told the *Militant*, "It took me 10 years to qualify for benefits. Now I don't know if I'll live to be able to collect them. President Bush talks about all the surplus money they have, but they don't have money to pay miners." Brewer worked in mines in Colorado, New Mexico, and Utah and suffers from lung diseases and low

blood oxygen.

Referring to all the obstacles placed in the way of miners receiving compensation, Henry Blackwater said, "We have to keep fighting."

During an intensive period of nuclear bomb development and deployment following World War II, Washington established uranium mines in a number of locations on the Colorado Plateau, many on Indian reservation lands.

At first the "uranium rush" of the 1950s, much of which occurred on reservation lands in the Southwest, appeared to be an economic boon for the Navajo people who had been devastated by brutal livestock reductions at government hands between 1932 to 1942. Today uranium is known as "Leetso," or yellow monster, in the Navajo language because of the long-term devastation it has caused.

During this boom the energy companies reaped gigantic profits, while uranium miners, particularly Navajos, were paid wages that were sometimes below the minimum wage.

The industry went bust in the 1980s and no conventional uranium mines remain in the United States today. But disasters and contamination haunt the fragile, beautiful landscape of the plateau just as the mining and milling have destroyed the lives of the miners.

For example, the 40-year-old Atlas mill tailings pile at Moab, Utah, is located 750 feet from the Colorado River. The contaminated hill covers 130 acres and leaks on the average 57,000 gallons of contaminated fluids into the river each day. The radioactive isotopes that are released in the mining and milling process have very long half-lives and are slowly making their way downriver into the sediments and water of Lake Mead, which supplies drinking water for Arizona, Southern California, and Las Vegas, Nevada.

Government negligence

A 1995 report from the Advisory Committee on Human Radiation Experiment concluded that the federal government did virtually nothing for two decades to lessen the risks for miners, despite definitive evidence from Europe that uranium miners were contracting lung cancer and other illnesses from their work. The U.S. Energy Department, which manages the nuclear weapons production program, said in March 1997 that the miners' exposure was "a tragedy created by the government's failure to use available resources" to adequately ventilate the mine shafts and reduce the workers' risks of exposure to lung cancer.

In last year's changes to RECA, an additional \$20 million was authorized for cancer screening in areas hard hit by atomic fallout from atmospheric testing of atomic bombs in the 1960s. But some areas that had more fallout than now-eligible areas still are not added, such as Salt Lake County. This is because a federal study in 1998 concluded that virtually every county in America was hit with some fallout.

Miners have formed a number of groups to press their fight, such as the Office of Navajo Uranium Workers in Shiprock, New Mexico, and the Western States Radiation Exposure Compensation Act Reform Coalition, in Grand Junction, where a March 16 meeting was covered by the *Denver Post* among other papers.

According to the *Post*, Hazel Cherry, whose husband died of lung cancer in May after 19 years in a uranium mine in Uravan, Colorado, read an IOU made out to her late husband from the Justice Department. "I am pleased to inform you the above referenced claim under RECA has been approved. Regrettably, because the money to pay the claims has been exhausted, we are unable to send a compensation payment to you at this time. When Congress provides additional funds, we will contact you to commence the payment process."

There are more than 1,100 abandoned mines in the Navajo Nation alone. The Navajo Abandoned Mine Lands Department has reclaimed 441 mines to date.

Dockworkers in Brazil paralyze port

BY RÓGER CALERO

Workers have paralyzed the port in Santos, Brazil, the busiest in Latin America, for two weeks to protest a range of antiunion measures being demanded by port operators and authorities.

Some 11,000 stevedores, along with ship repair and maintenance workers, have organized street demonstrations and mass rallies. They have won the support of 19 port workers' unions and national union federations.

The strikers won support from other unions especially after military police units using tear gas and rubber bullets attacked a dockworkers' demonstration April 2, injuring 50 workers and arresting 35 others. Many of those arrested were taken out of the homes of people that had offered shelter to the demonstrators during the attack. Workers fought back with paving stones against the police assault.

Since 1993, as part of their drive to privatize Brazilian ports, the government and the port bosses have pressed to end the right of the unions to select and set crew sizes for vessels. According to the *Financial Times*, eight of the 10 unions at Santos had already accepted legislation that gives

the Organ of Labor Management (OGMO), a bosses' institution, authority to manage the call-up process.

"For 67 years the current method has been efficient, the result of learning, of trial and error. It is a tested method," said Vanderlei José da Silva, president of the Santos Stevedores Union, the *Times* reported. "So it is easy to conclude that the aim is not to alter the selection, but to break unionized labor."

Port operators in Santos complain that labor costs for handling containers is well above international standards. The Brazilian rulers seek to bring down per-container costs to \$150, from \$180 and \$250 in Rio Grande do Sul and Rio de Janeiro respectively. The bosses claim the cost per box in Santos is \$330. Over the past few years, after turning the port terminals in Santos over to private companies, the bosses have been able to increase the number of containers processed per hour from 11 to 30.

Despite the mobilizations, private operators have tried to maintain ship operations, moving some cargo under the protection of court orders and the police. Twenty-eight ships were tied up in port in the general cargo, container, and bulk grains areas and

30 ships were waiting to moor by the 12th day of the strike. In one incident, the Ministry of Labor was forced by the actions of stevedores to fine two companies for moving cargo with foreign seafarers, a violation of Brazilian legislation.

Seeking to end the strike, the Brazilian government won a labor court ruling calling the strike "improper" because of the economic damage it had caused, and blamed the workers for its violent character. The ruling also quadrupled the daily fine imposed on the union eight days into the strike. Military police units have occupied the entire port area, using armored vehicles to protect private terminals. Armed men are also positioned on crane platforms and bridges used for container movement.

The presidents of the stevedores and ship repair and maintenance unions are scheduled to travel to the capital, Brasília, April 9 to meet with the Ministry of Labor to reopen negotiations. This move comes after the firm Ultrafertil, which operates one of the private terminals, accepted the union's rules for job assignments. According to the union, four other agencies representing port operators are open to separate agreements.