

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Cubans celebrate 40th anniversary of farmers group

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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

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'Spy' trial of Cubans in Florida targets rights

BY CINDY JAQUITH
AND ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

MIAMI—On June 8, a jury in a federal courtroom here handed down guilty verdicts against five men on all 23 charges of "spying" for the government of Cuba. One of the five, Gerardo Hernandez, was found guilty of the unprecedented charge of "conspiracy to commit murder" in the deaths of four rightists whose planes were shot down in 1996 when they deliberately violated Cuban airspace.

The defendants are all Cubans or Cuban-Americans. Three of them—Gerardo Hernandez, Ramon Labaniño, and Antonio Guerrero—were convicted of "conspiracy to commit espionage" and "conspiracy to act as an unregistered foreign agent" and could get life imprisonment. Fernando Gonzalez and Rene Gonzalez, convicted of "conspiracy to act as an unregistered foreign agent," face possible 10-year sentences. The judge has set separate sentencing for each defendant, beginning in late September.

These convictions set new precedents for violation of democratic rights of all working people by Washington. They are also being used by the big-business media and capitalist politicians here to further the U.S. government's "cold war" against Cuba.

In 1998, the FBI announced it had discovered a "Cuban spy network" in Florida and arrested 10 people. They were charged with trying to "infiltrate" the U.S. Southern Command, passing U.S. "military secrets" to Havana, and "infiltrating and "disrupt-

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Minnesota cops target immigrants, union fight

BY TOM FISKE
AND BOBBI NEGRÓN

ST. PAUL, Minnesota—The INS, local police, and the county sheriff have been seeking out Latino workers and asking for their immigration papers in Long Prairie, Minnesota, in a campaign some workers say is in part meant to intimidate union organizing at a large meatpacking plant in the city. One Mexican worker has been deported.

According to reports by two workers in Long Prairie, located about 100 miles northwest of here, INS agents have been knocking on the doors of Latino workers in a trailer park near Long Prairie Packing Co., a beef slaughterhouse where members of United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 789 have been putting up resistance to a speedup offensive by the company. Other workers have been stopped on foot, in their cars, or on bicycle.

"Five workers from the plant have been taken to jail," stated Jose Rena, a worker at Long Prairie Packing who was himself stopped by the INS and asked for his papers after he left the plant on his bicycle. "Many of these five were just picked up on

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Union action demands: Free Charleston Five!

5,000 in S. Carolina condemn frame-up of longshoremen

BY OMARI MUSA
AND ARLENE RUBINSTEIN

COLUMBIA, South Carolina—In an outpouring of working-class support, 5,000 unionists and others participated in the Rally for Racial Justice and Workers' Rights here June 9 to demand the state drop its antiunion frame-up charges against five longshoremen.

Kenneth Jefferson, Elijah Forde Jr., Peter Washington Jr., Rick Simmons, and John Edgerton, members of the International Longshoremen's Association (ILA) Local 1422, have been indicted on felony "inciting to riot" charges by state Attorney General Charles Condon. The charges stem from a police riot in January 2000 against dockworkers who were picketing against the shipping company Nordana as it attempted to use nonunion labor to unload its ships. The five are under house arrest and could not attend the demonstration. The protest was organized by the South Carolina AFL-CIO and South Carolina Progressive Network.

The ILA local has waged a campaign to defend its members and push back the company and government attack. This includes winning support from labor unions and other organizations at speaking engagements and rallies in cities across the country over the past several months.

The impact of this work could be seen in the number of workers at the rally from scores of different unions. They included



Militant/Dave Wulp

In an effort to defend so-called right-to-work laws, state officials are pressing "inciting to riot" charges against longshoremen attacked by cops during union picket last year.

United Auto Workers; Service Employees International Union; United Steelworkers of America; Boilermakers; Transport Workers Union; Communication Workers of America; the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees (UNITE); and

many others.

Workers involved in strikes and other struggles came to express their solidarity with the Charleston 5. They included a carload of UNITE members who had struck

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'We're fighting for freedom' in Western Sahara

BY JACK WILLEY

DAKHLA REFUGEE CAMP, Western Sahara—"We have struggled and will continue to struggle for freedom, and nobody will stop us. We would rather die defending

our land than bow down to the king of Morocco," stated Salem Besir, the head of the parliament of the government-in-exile of Western Sahara.

Salem was answering questions for foreign guests who were part of a visit by several organizations supporting the struggle of the Sahrawi people for independence from Moroccan occupation. The solidarity visit, which included members of the International Organizing Committee for the anti-imperialist world youth festival this August

in Algiers, coincided with the June 9 Day of the Martyrs national holiday and with the fifth Congress of the Union of Youth of Western Sahara (UJSARIO).

The people of Western Sahara have been struggling for independence from colonial domination for more than 100 years. From 1884 to 1975 the territory was a direct colony of Spain. In 1973, The Front for the Liberation of Saguia el Hamra and Rio de Oro, or Polisario, was formed. The new or-

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Publishing schedule

Due to the *Militant* staff participation in the June 14-17 Active Workers Conference, this is a two-week issue. The next *Militant* will be published June 28.

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CUBA and the COMING AMERICAN REVOLUTION



JACK BARNES

NEW FROM PATHFINDER

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Scandalmongering against N.Y. mayor coarsens politics

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

NEW YORK—At a time when a number of class conflicts are unfolding here—from city government attacks on city teachers to the fight to remove the U.S. Navy from the Puerto Rican island of Vieques—the city's big-business media has for the past several weeks bombarded the public with details about Mayor Rudolph Giuliani's divorce dispute with his spouse Donna Hanover.

AS I SEE IT

The barrage of sensational news and commentary about the personal life of the mayor is damaging to the interests of working people. It seeks to draw workers and middle-class layers into becoming riveted on gossip and exposures about the morals of the "elite," and to drag them into the morass of the politics of resentment against rich and prominent figures. It is a distraction from the pressing struggles unfolding in the city and around the world and undercuts the ability of working people to take the moral high ground in confronting the offensive by the bosses and their government.

The way the news media tells it, Giuliani's decision to separate from his wife; the mayor's personal relationship with another woman, Judith Nathan; and the multitude of disputes involved in a pending divorce proceeding is the most important issue facing this city's more than 8 million people.

"Meltdown Time for the Mayor: Giuliani 'distracted' amid personal woes," "Rudy's No. 1 Gal Pal 'Very good friend' forever, he hopes," "Mayor's Pals Reveal His Secret Anguish—Drug causes impotence," and "Rudy Takes Aim at Donna's Perks—May try to cut her staff, office, travel funds," are among the major headlines in the city's daily papers day after day. The nationwide weekly *People* magazine placed this topic on the cover of the May 26 issue under the

title, "The Mayor, The Wife, The Mistress."

Much of the press coverage has been around Donna Hanover's suit in divorce court seeking to block the mayor from bringing his friend Judith Nathan into Gracie Mansion, the luxurious residence of the city's mayor. Currently the mayor, his two children, and Hanover reside there. Shortly after a judge lifted a gag order on the case, which Giuliani wanted reimposed, the mayor's lawyer, Raoul Felder, unleashed a barrage of anti-woman slanders against Hanover, which the press repeated. He called Hanover an "uncaring mother" who schemed to advance her acting career while "howling like a stuck pig." He also stated, "She reminds me of the little kid who murders his parents and complains he's an orphan."

The dispute remained a major news story when the judge ruled May 21 that Nathan could not enter Gracie Mansion, and Giuliani moved to cut the perks associated with Hanover's role as "First Lady" that includes a \$300,000 annual budget. Giuliani's first step was to strip Hanover of her title as Gracie Mansion hostess.

A year ago last May, Giuliani announced he was abandoning his campaign for the U.S. Senate, amidst a similar barrage of soap-opera type articles in the media exposing and scandalizing the mayor's personal life. Prior to that public frenzy, politics in New York had been marked by increasing mobilizations against police brutality.

When Patrick Dorismond, a 26-year-old Black man was killed by cops on the streets of Manhattan last March, Giuliani launched a campaign of slander against the young man in an effort to justify the cops' action. But huge demonstrations exposed Giuliani's lies, making the mayor's stance a liability for the ruling class.

But the way that Giuliani has been brought down—by scandalizing and publicizing the most intimate details of his personal life—is a setback to working people.

During his two terms in office, Giuliani, a liberal Republican politician, has been at

Meat packers march in Washington State



Militant/Jeff Hamill

Five hundred people marched in Pasco, Washington, June 3 in support of meat packers at IBP, Smith Frozen Foods, and Lamb-Weston, three plants organized by Teamsters Local 556. Workers at Smith recently rejected a takeback contract. "This march is to address the dangerous conditions at the plant like the high line speed and slippery floors, as well as harassment and discrimination," said IBP shop steward José Meraz.

the cutting edge of the drive by the ruling rich to attack the rights and living standards of working people. However, as he has attempted to press forward along this front he's come up against growing working-class resistance in the city.

For example, thousands of public school teachers rallied at City Hall last month against demands for longer working days, individual "merit pay," and moves to undercut seniority. In March, 3,000 transit workers rallied to defend health benefits the bosses are seeking to weaken.

The mayor backed the campaign by Edison Schools Inc. to privatize five of the city's worst performing schools and run them on a for-profit basis. Despite a \$500,000 grant by the Board of Education to Edison to promote this scheme, working people with children at these five schools saw this for what it was—an attack on public education—and overwhelmingly voted the proposal down. The mayor has also backed efforts to overturn the city's bilingual education program, a drive that also ran into opposition from working people.

In an attack on free speech, the mayor called for censoring some controversial works of art on display at the Brooklyn Museum, threatening to cut public funds for institutions that exhibit such displays, though so far without much success. He created a self-proclaimed "decency panel" charged with keeping such works of art out of museums that receive public money.

The Giuliani administration has given the nod to more aggressive policing tactics, including the deployment of large contingents of cops at many demonstrations in the city. Over the past months the police department has started jailing anyone arrested at a demonstration of more than 20 people instead of simply issuing summons for misdemeanor charges.

Meanwhile homelessness in the city has risen to levels unequaled since the 1980s. Every night more than 25,000 people, despite more stringent screening procedures initiated by the Giuliani administration, stay in public shelters that are increasingly over-

crowded and unsanitary. And infant mortality is soaring in some of the poorer working-class areas like central Harlem, where 1999 figures put it at 15.5 infant deaths for every 1,000 live births, up 35 percent from the previous year.

It's in confronting these political issues that a fighting working-class movement can be built.

Diversion for working people

The increasing coarseness of political discourse among capitalist politicians and within the media, accompanied by the pornographication of politics involving gossip and prying into the personal lives of public figures, offers no road forward for working people. Such methods are the stock-in-trade for rightist and fascist forces, who seek to build their movement by railing against the corruption and degradation of the "ruling elite," while promoting policies—from scapegoating immigrants to Jew hatred—that weaken and divide the working class.

It's a trap for working people who have been victimized by the policies carried out by the Giuliani administration to get diverted into thinking that with these salacious attacks against the mayor he is "just getting what he deserves." Such an approach targets hard-won rights previously won by working people, like the right to privacy. It corrodes human solidarity and the dignity the working class brings to human relations.

The fight by the working class for the moral high ground and against the coarsening of political discourse is a fight for the right to practice politics free from harassment by the government, the bosses, and rightist thugs.

The problem with the capitalists and their political representatives is not that they are immoral, hypocritical people as individuals. The scandalmongering is an effort—organized from within capitalist politics, largely by its ultraright wing—to make gains from middle-class panic and draft workers along with the declining ruling class itself down into the pit of resentment and salacious envy.

THE MILITANT

Union solidarity

Across the country and around the world, workers are resisting the employers' offensive and reaching out in solidarity to other workers and participating in protests around broader social issues, such as immigrant rights and the fight against the death penalty. The *'Militant'* covers these struggles every week.



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Indonesian president faces impeachment

BY PATRICK O'NEILL

Impeachment proceedings approved May 30 against President Abdurrahmin Wahid of Indonesia are the focus of a shift by the ruling class in their attempts to keep in check rising independence and labor struggles in the country. The 365-to-4 margin in favor of impeachment showed the president's increasing isolation among the country's politicians in the capital of Jakarta.

The same day, troops broke up a demonstration of 6,000 Wahid supporters outside the gates of the legislature. Around 1,000 protesters who managed to break through a security fence were stopped by four lines of soldiers backed by armoured vehicles and tanks. Hundreds of paratroopers and police also cracked down on protesters in the town of Pasuruan, in Wahid's home province of East Java, fatally shooting one protester.

Wahid has served as president for 18 months. He was appointed as the head of a "National Unity Cabinet" following the 1999 election in which the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDI-P), headed by Megawati Sukarnoputri, received the highest vote. The election was the first held since the resignation of the dictator Suharto in May 1998. Megawati is almost certain to succeed Wahid if he is forced to step aside.

Representatives of seven of the 10 parliamentary factions supported the May 30 motion. Prominent among them was Golkar, which under Suharto functioned as the permanent ruling party and enjoyed close links with the military and state apparatus. Its leaders are today trying to appeal to working people who bear the burden of the ongoing economic crisis. "The people's lives are worsening, the market and donor institutions have lost confidence, the rupiah is losing its value, unemployment is increasing, and prices are going up," said the party's spokesperson Evita Asmalda during the parliamentary debate.

Wahid has "no intention of quitting" said Foreign Minister Alwi Shihab after the humiliating vote was cast. However, each step the besieged and ailing president has taken

Students call October protest to defend affirmative action

BY ILONA GERSH

ANN ARBOR, Michigan—Students at a June 1-3 conference here have called an October protest in Cincinnati to further the struggle to defend affirmative action.

The National Student/Youth Conference to Defend Affirmative Action and Integration and Struggle for Equality was held at the University of Michigan Law School in Ann Arbor. The 200 people in attendance were joined for the June 1 session by 200 students who came on buses from high schools in Detroit and Ann Arbor. The session was devoted to struggles of high school students. About a dozen of the students stayed through the end of the conference.

A fight to defend the affirmative action admissions policy of the University of Michigan Law School gained national attention last year after students organized several rallies on campus. In March, a U.S. district judge ruled against affirmative action at the school, but protests help force a temporary stay on implementing this ruling until an appeal by the university is heard by the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals in Cincinnati this October.

The conference drew participation of 30 students from Penn State University who had organized protests demanding the university investigate racist attacks and death threats against Black student leaders and protect those being threatened. The students were leaders of a campaign to demand more funding for African and African American studies programs.

Several activists attended from the University of California at Berkeley, where the Board of Regents recently decided to lift its 1995 ban on affirmative action in admissions. Students active in a campaign for a "living wage" for workers at Harvard, and in affirmative action struggles at Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island, and the University of Florida in Tampa also attended. There were also students from the University of Massachusetts in Amherst and Colorado State University in Denver.



Workers demonstrate in South Jakarta to demand government withdraw ministerial decree annulling severance pay and service fees to retired or dismissed workers. Ongoing labor rallies forced officials to announce a 14-day delay in implementing decree.

in the last month has served to rally more political figures to the opposition's cause, and to expose his isolation. When he ordered Security Minister Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono to take "stern measures" to enforce law and order two days before the parliamentary vote, the minister demonstratively sought Megawati's advice. An earlier threat to declare a state of emergency received a quick rebuff from the army's high command.

'National disintegration'

Wahid lost more support in late May when, according to the Reuters agency, he claimed that "supporters in the rebellious province of Aceh and his own political heartland of East Java had both asked him to become president, suggesting they would break away from Indonesia" if the impeachment motion proceeded.

"He said there will be national disintegration if he is ousted. This is not what a president should do. He should protect the citizens and not encourage separatism," said PDI-P spokesperson, Sophan Sophian.

But it is not the statements of the country's president that are the source of independence struggles. Since the weakening of Suharto's iron grip over Indonesia, whose 220 million people live on a patchwork of many islands and speak a number of different languages, Jakarta has been unable to keep the lid on movements in East Timor, West Papua, and Aceh. Conflicts between indigenous peoples and settler

populations have frequently wracked the Maluku Islands and Kalimantan.

Megawati "is known to the rest of the world as a fervent nationalist opposed to increased autonomy for the restive provinces," wrote the editorial writers of Australia's *Melbourne Age* on May 22. The big-business paper claimed that Megawati "is also closer to the military than Mr Wahid." The army's 38 members of parliament abstained in the May 30 vote.

At least some mouthpieces for the capitalist class hope that Megawati will be able to get away with economic "reforms" dictated by the imperialist powers through the International Monetary Fund. "You need a popular, credible, strong leader to deliver unpopular but necessary programmes," Indonesian economist Sri Mulyani Indrawati told *Newsweek* in early June.

A special session of the People's Consultative Assembly, which comprises the members of parliament and 200 appointed legislators, will convene on August 1 to hear the case for impeachment. "Although some lawmakers are eager to accelerate the process," wrote Reuters correspondent Mark Landler on May 31, "nobody is advocating that Indonesia follow the recent example of the Philippines"—a reference to the street mobilizations that opponents of President Joseph Estrada organized to force him out of office in January.

"The stately pace of the impeachment process has robbed the scene of much of its drama, which may not be bad in view of the

unrest that bubbles just under the surface," wrote Landler.

This unrest finds sharp expression, not just in the generalized social tensions in many parts of the country, but in the numerous strikes and protests organized by workers in the telecommunications, banking, textile, hotel, auto, and other sectors.

Thousands of workers marked May Day this year by staging "rallies in major cities across the country," according to the *Jakarta Post*. "Participants were unified in demanding that May Day be declared an official holiday, that workers be given greater freedom to organize, and that authorities put an end to arbitrary dismissals," reported the paper.

In Jakarta, Muchtar Pakpahan, the chairman of the Indonesian Prosperous Labor Union, "called on the government to raise the minimum wage 100 percent, [and] also demanded the government eliminate working contract systems used by employers and establish an official eight-hour workday." The minimum wage in Jakarta stands at US\$35.50 a month.

Two weeks later, the *Post* reported that threats of "massive labor rallies" forced the Minister of Manpower and Transmigration, Al-Hilal Hamdi, to "delay for 14 days the implementation of a ministerial decree annulling severance pay and service fees to retired or dismissed workers." The decision was reached "after the first of what labor unions had promised to be a string of labor rallies and strikes. About 3,000 demonstrators from the All-Indonesia Workers Union Federation started camping in front of the minister's office in the morning."

In another sign of the ferment among workers, government attempts to silence union activists by threatening them with prosecution and jail was dealt a blow with the release after one month's imprisonment of Ngadinah, a leader of the union at shoe manufacturer PT Panarub.

Ngadinah was arrested on a complaint by a company executive that she had "masterminded" strikes by 8,000 workers at the plant in Tangerang, near Jakarta, in September of last year. The arrest sparked protests by the Federation of Independent Trade Unions and others. The government agreed to her release on May 22.

"The government's failure to ensure the rights of laborers to live a proper life is a form of crime against humanity," Ngadinah told the *Jakarta Post*. "PT Panarub may think that by sending me to court, other workers will no longer dare to struggle for their rights," she said. "My struggle for laborers' rights is not only for myself or Panarub workers, but is more to arouse moral indignation among workers all over the country to wake up and fight suppression against laborers."

Machinists union officials back U.S. rulers' plans to deploy antiballistic missile system

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

In a feature article headlined "Bombs Bursting in Air" on the cover of the spring 2001 *IAM Journal*, officials of the International Association of Machinists announced their support for U.S. government plans to develop and deploy an antiballistic missile system. The plan, set in motion by the Clinton administration, is now being further developed by President George Bush.

"The U.S. should move forward methodically and intelligently with a robust program of research, development, and testing," IAM president Tom Buffenbarger stated in the *IAM Journal*. "We should do this right so all parties concerned here and around the world, have a chance to see what a National Missile Defense can actually do."

Union officials promote this government military project on the basis that it would create and maintain jobs for IAM members employed at Boeing, Raytheon, Lockheed Martin, and Aerojet.

They also echo arguments by U.S. officials and the big-business media that the missile system is needed to counteract possible actions by "rogue nations," that is, governments in Third World countries that do not meet Washington's approval, including Iran, Iraq, Libya, and north Korea. To reinforce this point, the *IAM Journal* prints a map showing the path of a missile recently

fired by north Korea that traveled past the islands comprising Japan.

In his "Commentary" on the inside cover of the *Journal*, Buffenbarger repeats the rationalizations put forward by Democratic and Republican politicians seeking to whip up support for the missile system. He argues, "Which of our cities will they target? Anchorage? Honolulu, Seattle? Portland? San Francisco? Los Angeles? In the next 15 years, rogue states with chemical, nuclear, or biological weapons will also have missiles capable of reaching American cities. And the likelihood of terrorists acquiring such weapons increases by the day."

Under the Clinton administration tests were begun to be put in place for developing an Alaska-based Theater Missile Defense system. In early May, Bush announced much more extensive plans for developing a "Star Wars"-type system with a submarine-based and space-based platform to target missiles in the boost phase. If such a system could be developed and successfully deployed, and the U.S. rulers could convince governments around the world that it actually works, this would be a step toward Washington having, for the first time in decades, a first-strike nuclear capacity. It would embolden the U.S. rulers to use its vast nuclear weapons arsenal to threaten countries where capitalism has been over-

turned, such as China and Russia, as well as other governments that come into conflict with U.S. imperialism.

The *Journal* article describes the projections for the National Missile Defense (NMD) system currently being developed as much more limited and "realistic" than the \$1 trillion-plus Strategic Defense Initiative, known as Star Wars, first put forward by President Ronald Reagan in the 1980s. IAM officials call for a "go-slow" approach in developing the complex antimissile shield, calling moves to speed up projections for its deployment based on a "political timetable" unrealistic.

The support by IAM officials to the U.S. government's militarization campaign is consistent with the themes of other articles in the spring issue of the *IAM Journal* that, rather than promoting solidarity and united action with fellow workers across borders to fight the bosses' offensive, seek to convince workers to tie their fortunes to the U.S. bosses. One article is titled "Creative Work System Builds Trust Between Workers and Managers." Another article, "NAFTA Panel Opens Door to Unsafe Mexican Trucks," peddles the chauvinist campaign against the North American Free Trade Agreement that, in the guise of concern for highway safety, pits U.S.-born workers against Mexican-born truck drivers.

Exchange with reader on the European Union

Why the YS opposes the European Union

The Young Socialists in Sweden would like to thank D.O. for his letter concerning a working-class stance on the European Union (EU) and the recent protests here in Stockholm during an EU summit meeting. D.O.'s letter contributed to the political discussion the Young Socialists in Sweden had on the question. Although the article referred to (see April 23 issue of the *Militant*) was not intended to clarify the YS political stance on the European Union, D.O.'s letter offers us a good opportunity to expand on our previous contribution to the Young Socialists Around the World column.

The Young Socialists oppose the European Union (EU) as we oppose any imperialist military or economic pact. The EU is a project through which capitalists in Europe try to gain a competitive edge over their imperialist rivals, primarily the U.S. rulers. As is the case with the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the EU has nothing to do with free trade or fair competition.

Instead, it is designed to squeeze more surplus value out of workers and farmers in the EU member states and in other countries they trade with. Hand in hand with the EU and the introduction of the euro come austerity measures, assaults on the social wage, and demands by the employers and their governments on working people for more "labor flexibility." The YS opposes the common currency, the euro, and the 60,000-strong rapid reaction force now being organized under EU auspices.

The Young Socialists agree with the demand "Sweden out of the EU." We also demand that this organization be dissolved completely. Sweden is currently holding the rotating presidency of the EU. One of the issues the Swedish government has focused on is the enlargement of the EU to include some Eastern European countries, hoping to collaborate with pro-capitalist regimes there to further erode the remaining conquests of the workers states and open up a new region for capitalist investment and markets. The YS urges workers in these countries to reject moves by the governments there in this direction and to oppose the entry of any country into the imperialist NATO military alliance.

Anti-immigrant Shengen Agreement

The Shengen Agreement is a part of this cooperation between the capitalist governments in Europe to strengthen their hand against working people. This legislation targets the rights of immigrants and makes it more difficult to enter the EU from a non-EU country. It also includes moves toward more police control and registration of working people. The YS opposes this anti-working class legislation and demands opening of all borders.

The fact that the EU is part of making working people bear the burden of the world capitalist economic crisis does not mean that protests against the EU are necessarily progressive. Communists need to advance a clear class perspective in mobilizations against the EU.

The demonstration in Stockholm was politically similar to the protests in Seattle against the World Trade Organization (WTO), and others in Prague and Quebec City. They are a diversion for working people and youth. The forces within the anti-EU demonstrations advance a nationalist perspective.

This demonstration was mainly an activity of petty-bourgeois organizations and their supporters and is part of their "Sweden First" campaign. They express worries about what consequences the EU has on the "Swedish model." They portray Swedish imperialism as less brutal and Swedish capitalism as more democratic. They argue these Swedish "qualities" are undercut within the EU. Accordingly, they say, Swedish capitalism without the constraints of the EU would develop in a more democratic fashion.

These perspectives are reactionary because they let the imperialist government of Sweden—a government against which we aim to lead a revolutionary struggle to put in place a workers and farmers government—off the hook. They reinforce the myth put forward by the capitalist class here that they represent a better "socialist" capitalism. Bourgeois liberals, Swedish social

democracy, and Stalinist currents here have all helped divert working people from revolutionary struggle with this myth. They appeal to the capitalists to make their system more humane through reforms.

The actions themselves had no progressive content that a working-class organization could support. This is why we did not support them, not because we consider it wrong to demonstrate against the EU.

Strikingly, YS members and Communist League members in workplaces did not notice any discussions about this demonstration, while at the same time many co-workers had opinions about the recent massive layoffs at Ericsson.

Our experience is that demonstrations in this framework are poor ground for recruitment to the communist movement, even if sales can be good. We do not let ourselves be organized into this kind of activity by petty-bourgeois radicals, who have been holding similar activities during this half year of the Swedish EU presidency.

The YS was founded with the conviction that we cannot simply preach revolution, but must bring the lessons of working-class struggles and Marxism to workers, farmers, and young people we are involved together with in struggles. We have had plenty of opportunity to build and participate in mobilizations that, regardless of their leaderships, objectively advance the working-class and anti-imperialist movement. These include protests against the military assault on Iraq, actions against police brutality, and demonstrations for abortion rights and for immigrants' rights. We visit picket lines and join strikes as we follow the lines of resistance of workers and farmers.

The crisis of capitalism will propel workers and farmers to join forces on a European scale as they transform their unions into instruments for struggle and forge revolutionary parties. They will fight against their own capitalist governments and certainly mobilize against the assaults carried out under the flag of the European Union. We celebrate the strengthening of these working-class struggles and the weakening of the EU. We look forward to a visit to British-occupied Ireland and extend to you an invitation to visit us in imperialist Sweden at the earliest opportunity.

Kristoffer Schultz

Björn Tirsén

Stockholm, Sweden

Questions on stance toward anti-EU protests

As a young Irish worker who has subscribed to the *Militant* for two years now, I must first extend solidarity to all those involved in struggles for national self-determination and for socialism. In addition, I must pay tribute to your very worthwhile publication (in particular its continued excellent coverage of the Irish freedom struggle) and to the work of the Pathfinder volunteers who are working to ensure the future widespread availability of literature essential to the acquisition of meaningful political analysis and action.

Unfortunately, the rest of this letter is concerned with the contents of an article written by a YS member from Sweden containing an argument which I felt was not properly thought out. According to the article, the YS did not support a protest organized around an EU summit in Stockholm as they construed it as being conducted "in a nationalist framework," as opposed to one in "the common interests of working people around the world." They instead preferred to focus upon "the alternative of making socialist revolution."

Whilst we all must agree on the need for consistently focusing on the latter, it does not preclude us from dealing with the key issues coming out of the EU integration and expansion project. Moreover, I feel that a popular opposition across the continent, with a base in the working class, could be built around opposition to the undemocratic and wholly unaccountable structures of the EU and the ECB [European Community Bank].

Björn Tirsén noted the presence of nation-



Workers march in Paris May 22 to protest layoffs by Danone, the French food group, Marks & Spencer, the British retailer, and other companies.

alist banners and flags, something which has been repeated throughout such protests across Europe. These are indicative of the fear which petty-bourgeois elements feel at the effects and consequences of EU integration, directed, as it is, in the interests of the "all-powerful" and wholly unaccountable Financial Sector and the Big Bourgeoisie. However, just because protests have a nationalist direction, it doesn't mean that we socialists must avoid uniting in common cause against anti-working-class legislation. (A fact testified to in the original article which recognised the anti-immigrant implications of the Shengen Agreement. Yet the YS does not seem to oppose this legislation?)

In essence, EU enlargement will orchestrate the subjection of the working class throughout the continent to the requirements of International Finance. Moreover, this subjection will go hand-in-hand with an increase in interimperialist frictions, within the EU and also with the United States, not to mention

with China or the former Soviet Union. Consequently, EU enlargement and integration have been accompanied with the development of a pan-European rapid reaction force, itself the subject of an attempted NATO takeover. Clearly then, the issues of EU integration and enlargement are center stage within the struggle of the working class and farmers across the continent.

It is against this backdrop that a reluctance to view the issue as an arena for struggle, and instead focus on promoting revolution alone, must be analyzed as bordering on ultraleftism. Indeed, such a view will isolate potential revolutionaries from the center of conflict and away from other advanced sections of the working class. I trust that my comments are taken in a spirit of comradeship as I truly wish the YS in Sweden the very best and would welcome a visit should they decide to come to Ireland.

D.O.

British-occupied Ireland

New Democratic Party swept from power in British Columbia elections

BY JOE YATES

VANCOUVER, British Columbia—The New Democratic Party was swept from office in provincial elections May 16 in Canada's westernmost province here. After having governed for 10 years, the New Democratic Party (NDP) received the lowest vote it or its predecessor, the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation, has ever received.

The NDP, a social democratic party with ties to the unions, received 21.6 percent of the vote compared to 39.5 percent in the 1996 election. It won only two of 79 seats, well below its previous low in 1963 of 27.8 percent and seven seats in the provincial legislature. A party is required to win at least four seats to have official party status.

The vote for the capitalist Liberal Party rose to 57.5 percent, up from 41.8 percent at the last election, giving them 77 seats. The provincial Liberals are a coalition of big business forces whose aim has been to drive the NDP from office. The right-wing Unity Party received 3.3 percent of the vote; the liberal Green Party 12.4 percent, up 10 points over the last election but not enough to win a seat in the legislature; and the Marijuana Party, which did not campaign in 1996, got 3.2 percent.

In part, the vote reflects increasing disillusionment with the NDP among working people, who face deteriorating economic conditions, cutbacks in basic services such as health care, and attacks on their unions. Adding to the overall squeeze resulting from the world capitalist economic crisis, industry in British Columbia has been hard hit by the fall in world commodity prices for many raw materials—including wood, pulp and paper, and minerals—that dominate exports from the province.

For example, the NDP government at-

tacked the right to strike when it ordered public school workers who are members of the Canadian Union of Public Employees back to work. In 1998 the government only allowed miserly wage increases for public service workers in contract negotiations.

The Liberals focused their campaign on carrying out a big tax cut. They proposed making education and ferry routes essential services, thereby limiting the right of workers to strike. The Liberals hope to make union recognition more difficult by reinstituting the use of secret ballots in representation elections. They also seek to outlaw bargaining on an industrywide basis.

One proposal that has sparked widespread opposition, especially among Native people, is to hold a referendum on the principles guiding land claims negotiations. This is a big issue because the vast majority of the province was never ceded by Native people. In recent history only one treaty has been signed with the Nisga'a people.

Chief Vern Jacks of the Tseycum Nation urged his people to vote for the NDP: "I think it will be all negative if [Liberal Party leader Gordon] Campbell gets in. He'll be starting an uproar. There'll be more roadblocks than anything else."

The Liberal government took office June 7. Among the challenges it will face are the transit strike in the Vancouver area, which is into its third month with no settlement in sight, and the campaign by nurses and hospital workers for new contracts.

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'Militant' earns respect among workers

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

"We made all our goals!" wrote Mary Ann Schmidt from Miami. "We sold the last two subscriptions to *Perspectiva Mundial* today—one on the job and one door-to-door." Frank Forrestal, a coal miner in Pittsburgh, wrote: "I sold a *Militant* subscription tonight to one of the miners a sales team met in West Virginia. He really liked the article on the mine workers rally at A.T. Massey and said he passed the paper around to 'several people who liked it a lot.' He said he liked the *Mili-*



Militant/Dan Fein

Pathfinder table at June 9 rally in South Carolina to defend dockworkers fighting frame-up charges

tant not because it was radical, but because it told the truth." "There are a small number of irons in the fire that may come through in the next 24 hours. If they do you'll hear from us," wrote Doug Cooper, a member of the Maritime Union of Australia, who noted that they also made their circulation goals there. Another message came in from James Harris in Atlanta: "Here's our final *Militant* subscription! We made our goal."

These and many similar reports highlight the concentrated international effort over the last two weeks of the eight-week drive by socialist workers and Young Socialists members to expand the readership of the socialist press. Through these efforts the supporters of the two publications sold 902 *Militant* subscriptions, 509 subscriptions to *PM*, and nearly 1,900 copies of the Pathfinder titles tied to the subscription campaign, which included *Cuba and the Coming American Revolution*, *Pathfinder Was Born with the October Revolution*, and

The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning. Although we came up a little short on several of the goals, the total sales and response to the Pathfinder titles, the *Militant*, and *Perspectiva Mundial* register the growing interest in the socialist publications and revolutionary literature.

Through the circulation drive socialist workers and Young Socialists were able to meet and deepen their collaboration with hundreds of working people and youth in cities and rural areas. In factories, mines, and mills, as well as in working-class districts, socialists are more well-known, having introduced the publications on the job, set up literature tables on street corners, and gone door-to-door in working-class neighborhoods. This is a real accomplishment of the drive.

Reports from various strikes, labor actions, and other demonstrations reflect the fact that more workers who have become active in these battles are familiar with the *Militant* and *PM*. Both publications have earned respect among working-class fighters. By establishing weekly sales activities in workers districts and selling to co-workers on the job both publications have become familiar to a broader layer of workers, which over time increases sales results and growing opportunities to recruit to the communist movement.

This includes workers involved in labor struggles like those who went on strike at Hollander Home Fashions in Los Angeles and Frackville, Pennsylvania. At the June 9 rally to defend dockworkers fighting frame-up riot charges, some 25 *Militant* subscriptions, 1 *Militant* renewal, 4 *PM* subs, 14 copies of *Cuba and the Coming American Revolution*, and 3 copies of *The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning* and more than 100 copies of the *Militant* were sold.

"A lot of people were there who were familiar with the *Militant* from previous struggles, including people from the Hollander Home Fashions plants in Frackville and Tignall, Georgia," said Naomi Craine, a textile worker from Charlotte, North Carolina. "The *Militant* renewal was to a worker from Continental General Tire in Charlotte. Another worker from that plant who bought a *Militant* subscription was with a friend who remembered the *Militant* from the strike there in 1999."

Workers districts

"We sold 29 *Militant* subscriptions in the workers district of Upper Manhattan over the last week of the subscription drive," said Brian Williams as he handed in a fat envelope full of subscription forms. "At a table set up in Upper Manhattan during our weekly Thursday evening sales mobilizations we sold eight *Militant* subscriptions in two-and-a-half hours. A man from Iran who lives in the area was quite interested in the *Militant*'s coverage on events in Algeria and the background material on the Algerian Revolution. He had previously traveled to Algiers and decided to purchase a *Militant* subscription."

"Another person who lives in the neighborhood came by the table we set up that next Sunday to thank

us for what we're doing and 'sound us out' about various political issues. He said he wasn't planning to get a subscription because he was moving to Canada shortly. After talking for awhile and pointing out several Pathfinder books, such as *The Revolution Betrayed* and the *New International* with the article 'U.S. Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War,' he decided to subscribe. He insisted, however, that he didn't have the extra \$5 to get the special offer on the new *Cuba and the Coming American Revolution* book. But an hour later, he came back, saying he decided to purchase that book as well."

The circulation drive has been part of the campaign by the Socialist Workers Party and YS to double the membership of the youth organization and win recruits to the communist movement. Many sales tables have been set up where a number of workers and young people stopped by who purchased *Militant* or *PM* subscriptions. Some of those who want to learn more about the need to build a proletarian party and communist youth organization will be attending the June 14-17 Active Workers Conference in Ohio. The drive has also helped spread information about the July 22-30 Cuba-U.S. Youth Exchange in Havana and the World Festival of Youth and Students in Algeria August 8-16.

"One of the *Militant* subscriptions we sold in one of the workers districts here in Pittsburgh was to a Palestinian, the owner of a small shop, who made an agreement with a YS member to set up a donation can in his store to raise funds for the Cuba Youth Exchange," said Salm Kolis. "Yesterday we went in to the store and started talking about the Cuban Revolution with him. He ended up buying the subscription, *Pathfinder Was Born with the October Revolution*, *The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning*, and *Cuba and the Coming American Revolution*."

Militant/PM subscription drive to win new readers April 14-June 10 (Final Chart)

Country	Militant			PM		Pamphlet	
	Goal	Sold	%	Goal	Sold	Goal	Sold
United Kingdom	35	40	114%	10	12	70	58
Australia*	12	13	108%	2	2	35	35
Sweden	12	12	100%	5	7	20	15
New Zealand							
Auckland	10	10	100%	1		20	21
Christchurch	8	7	88%	1	1	10	11
N.Z. total	18	17	94%	2	1	30	32
United States							
Tampa	8	9	113%	6	2	15	19
Washington*	27	30	111%	26	26	60	81
Cleveland	20	22	110%	6	6	30	38
Chicago	35	38	109%	25	30	75	97
Charlotte	12	13	108%	4	4	25	31
Seattle*	25	27	108%	8	10	55	59
Twin Cities	35	37	106%	25	32	50	51
Detroit	20	21	105%	5	4	40	44
Pittsburgh	40	42	105%	5	2	55	60
Birmingham*	25	26	104%	7	8	45	36
Grand Junction	25	26	104%	5	5	50	53
Des Moines	30	31	103%	20	31	45	62
Newark	40	41	103%	25	26	70	70
NY Garment Dist.	70	71	101%	55	45	150	155
Atlanta	30	30	100%	15	14	40	40
Boston*	25	25	100%	10	13	20	23
Miami	22	22	100%	20	21	70	75
Upper Manhattan	70	70	100%	50	58	125	145
Omaha	15	14	93%	18	23	20	30
Fresno	9	8	89%	9	8	15	15
Houston	35	30	86%	15	13	50	53
Los Angeles	50	43	86%	25	34	80	57
San Francisco	50	34	68%	25	22	100	117
Philadelphia	30	20	67%	10	7	45	35
Tucson	8	5	63%	5	1	6	
Allentown	18	11	61%	5	3	20	10
Brooklyn	75	36	48%	40	30	150	130
U.S. total	849	782	92%	469	478	1506	1586
Canada							
Vancouver	15	12	80%	2	3	35	36
Toronto	20	15	75%	3	4	40	41
Montreal	12	8	67%	5	2	40	48
Canada total	47	35	74%	10	9	115	125
Iceland*	6	3	50%	1		45	46
Int'l totals	979	902	90%	499	509	1821	1897
Goal/Should be	1000	1000	100%	500	500	1900	1900
IN THE UNIONS							
Australia							
MUA	2	2	100%			5	3
Meat workers	2	1				3	1
Total	4	3	75%				
United States							
UMWA	25	22	88%	1		25	23
UFCW	65	48	74%	80	82	170	118
UNITE	35	14	40%	30	22	70	40
Total	125	84	67%	111	104	265	181
New Zealand							
NDU	2	1	50%			2	1
MWU	1	0	0%			1	0
Total	3	1	33%			3	1
Canada							
UFCW	10	3	30%	2	0	15	9
UNITE	2		0%	2		9	5
Total	12	3	25%	4	0	24	14
raised goal*							

Boeing calls FBI into Renton plant

BY JEFF HAMILL

SEATTLE—The giant aircraft and military manufacturer Boeing called in the FBI to begin snooping around in response to what it claims is "suspicious wire damage" in as many as 10 Boeing 737 jetliners at the company's Renton plant, even though most of the planes have been "fixed, ground-tested and flight-tested, and delivered to customers," according to the *New York Times*.

Washington presses ahead on plans for missile shield

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

In a meeting with NATO defense ministers June 7, U.S. secretary of defense Donald Rumsfeld made clear to his European counterparts that the Pentagon intends to move as swiftly as possible to develop and deploy an antiballistic missile shield, even before testing of the system is completed. The meeting was part of a whirlwind tour of Europe in which Rumsfeld visited seven countries in seven days to explain Washington's perspective that scrapping the 1972 Antiballistic Missile Treaty was "inescapable."

"When you know they are going to build it no matter what, is it really worth the fight?" asked an official of the U.S.-dominated military alliance, as quoted by the *New York Times*. "I don't think so," said the official, who is from an unnamed European country.

Meanwhile, NATO is moving ahead with plans to set up a missile shield, awarding two \$13.5 million study contracts to a consortium led by the U.S. companies Lockheed Martin and Science Applications International. Like the system being projected by the Pentagon, NATO is "seeking what it called 'a layered theatre missile' defence system that could protect NATO forces by 2010," reports the *Financial Times*. "The studies will examine land, sea, and air-based systems."

The London-based daily quotes another unnamed diplomat from a European imperialist power who said, "We are trying to develop our own European Security and Defense policy. But if MD [U.S. missile defense] goes ahead, we will be beholden to the Americans for our security."

Wiring on three planes was damaged in early May, according to a Boeing spokesperson, who claimed seven more planes were damaged May 24. The company said cuts were made in places that are difficult to access. "Nobody talks to anybody about this except to the company or to the FBI," Boeing instructed its employees.

After raising the scare, Boeing official Doug Webb said such damage is "not common, but it's not unheard of" and did not say the damage was deliberate. In fact, Webb told the *Times* that airplane wiring is sometimes damaged in construction, from pulling wire bundles too hard or from drilling in the wrong spot. But he tried to win support for the federal cop intrusion by casting this "information" about "suspicious wire damage" as if the company already knew a worker and union member sabotaged the planes.

In language that would be intimidating to workers at the plant, FBI spokesperson Ray Lauer told the *Times*, "Destruction of an aircraft was a federal crime, which would give the FBI jurisdiction. If the damage was criminal, the case could also be investigated by the FBI as a violation of the federal Hobbes Act, which forbids interference in interstate commerce."

Matt Bates, an official with the International Association of Machinists, the largest union at Boeing, told the *Times* he had no information about the damage and said the matter "doesn't have any direct bearing on the union." He added, "Whoever did this is in need of help and should turn themselves in."

The last strike at the company was in February and March 2000 when the Society of Professional Engineering Employees in Aerospace organized a highly effective 40-day strike. Administrative office workers are currently involved in a union-organizing drive at the company.

The company-FBI collaboration comes on the heels of the establishment of a national counterintelligence office in Washington with the stated purpose of establishing closer collaboration between federal cops and company security forces to protect "national security assets" such as corporate secrets.

South Carolina rally demands, 'Free the Charleston five!'

Continued from front page

Hollander Home Fashions in Frackville, Pennsylvania. A busload of workers at Hollander's plant in Tignall, Georgia, who honored a strike picket line for 10 weeks, was also there. Nineteen UNITE members from Calvin Klein Sports in Abbeville, South Carolina, came chanting "Support the union, free the Charleston 5."

A delegation of 10 ILA members from locals in San Juan, Puerto Rico, traveled to the protest. Jose Velez, president of ILA Local 1575 in San Juan, told the *Militant*, "We are family. We are here to back up the Charleston 5." Jose Ojeda from the same local said, "I am also here to protest because of the U.S. use of the Puerto Rican island of Vieques as a bombing site for the last 60 years."

International support for the embattled local was emphasized by several speakers at the rally in front of the statehouse. Kwang Jun Yu of the Daewoo auto workers union in south Korea brought loud cheers from rally participants when he spoke about the attacks coming down on workers in that country. He noted that General Motors is planning to buy Daewoo Motors and lay off thousands of workers.

"I bring the solidarity of 13,000 Daewoo workers against racism, union-busting, and police violence," he said. "General Motors is using racism to keep us divided. Racism against Black people is horrible. This is capitalism. Exploitation of any worker is wrong." Kwang told the rally that Korean workers have very little unemployment insurance, and the cops are mobilized when the workers protest against their bosses. "We extend our solidarity," he told the crowd to loud applause.

After hearing Kwang's presentation, Vanessa Spann, a UNITE member at the National Linen laundry in Charleston, told

the *Militant*, "I had no idea of what they face [in Korea]. Every worker needs to join in as one."

State vows to prosecute

Attorney General Condon has repeatedly vowed to prosecute the framed-up dockworkers "to the full extent of the law." The charges he is pursuing carry up to 10 years in prison. The government prosecution also gives encouragement to a civil "damages" suit filed against ILA Local 1422 by the nonunion stevedoring outfit Nordana had hired in its attempt to break the union.

Condon insists the prosecution of the longshoremen is needed to uphold South Carolina's so-called "right-to-work" laws, legislation that prohibits labor contracts from stipulating all workers at a company belong to the union. The state justifies Nordana's drive to open up the docks to nonunion labor under this piece of union-busting legislation.

The capitalist class has a direct interest in keeping South and North Carolina largely nonunion. In the two states only 3.5 percent and 3.2 percent of workers belong to unions respectively—the lowest in the nation. As a result, the bosses have the upper hand in their attempts to reduce wages, pension plans, benefits, and union control on the job. But as more companies have set up shop in the South over the past two decades, the stakes have grown for big business in their drive to keep unions out.

Fight for union rights, against racism

William Lucy, secretary-treasurer of the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees and president of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists (CBTU) told the cheering crowd that Condon "has brought together the labor movement and



Militant/Dave Wulp

Workers who have been involved in strikes and struggles in garment, textile, rail, tire, and trucking industries joined the June 9 march to back the longshoremen's fight.

the civil rights movement." A large percentage of those at the march and rally were African-American working people.

Among the pro-union crowd here were 20 members of the CBTU from St. Louis. "We have driven 13 hours to get here and march with you," Lew Moye, president of the chapter, told the rally. "What we have here is an attack on the labor and civil rights movement. Trying to bust the ILA is like trying to bust the civil rights movement."

Tim McCall organized to get to the action along with a delegation of railroad workers who are members of the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees from Baton Rouge, Louisiana. "We came because this is an injustice to working people," he told the *Militant*. "Here we are in the 21st century and we have to protest the Confederate flag and police attacks on working people picketing. We have to stop this stuff now before it spreads."

Just days before the police assault on their picket line in January 2000, dockworkers from Charleston had taken part in a march of tens of thousands of people here in Columbia to demand that the Confederate battle flag be removed from the top of the statehouse. Repeated protests and a tourism boycott of

South Carolina forced the legislature to take down the flag last July, but a smaller version remains at the Confederate soldiers monument on the statehouse grounds.

More strength for coming fights

Rahman Allah was one of 20 members of United Steelworkers of America Local 850 at the demonstration. The union had fought Continental General Tire Co. in a yearlong strike that they won in 1999. "This is about all of us that work everyday. You never know when the next fight will ignite, but each one gives the next a little juice. More are coming."

ILA Local 1422 president Ken Riley told the rally that Condon "decided to attack us. But he didn't know the world was watching. We're going to organize in South Carolina like never before. We're part of a new labor movement in the South." Riley told the *Militant* at the end of the rally, "I think this was a fantastic day, a tremendous show of support and solidarity."

Students and youth were also a visible part of the action. Many of the marshals were from students from Charleston and Columbia. A group of students from Winthrop University in Rock Hill, South Carolina, joined the action as well. Lauren Bulchoz, a member of the group, said, "There is a student movement for union rights in the South. I think the auto worker from Korea was on target in talking about capitalism."

AFL-CIO executive council member Linda Chavez-Thompson spoke at the rally, as did ILA president John Bowers; James Spinoso, president of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union; United Mine Workers of America president Cecil Roberts; NAACP regional director Nelson Rivers; and the AFL-CIO state presidents from Georgia and Tennessee. International Dockworkers Council member Bjorn Borg called for international protest actions by longshore workers throughout the world when the trial of the Charleston five begins in September.

Organizers of the march and rally circulated petitions demanding the charges against the dockworkers be dropped. The petitions are to be delivered to South Carolina governor James Hodges.

Minnesota police, INS target immigrants

Continued from front page

the street. *La migra* [the INS] hasn't gone into the plant, but they know where to find workers where we live. They have been making their rounds around the trailers. The cops have a long list of names of people with them. I saw the list when they stopped me."

About a month ago a majority of workers in the boning department organized a job action, refusing to return to work from the company cafeteria for an hour and a half in response to a big increase in the speed of the production line. Long Prairie Packing is owned by Rosen's Diversified, Inc., the same holding company that owns Dakota Premium Foods, a beef slaughterhouse in South St. Paul where a yearlong fight against harsh speedup conditions has been part of a drive by the workers to win union recognition of Local 789.

Jose Luis Ramirez, a worker on the kill floor, said that conditions have not improved much in the plant. "We are killing 850 to 900 cows a day. The conditions are so bad that there is no space for workers to work."

Rena said workers are intimidated by the campaign of the INS and the local cops. "The company doesn't want to eliminate us, because we are productive. But the company wants us to forget about defending ourselves through the union and to scare us with the INS," he said. Workers at the packing plant have carried out other actions against the company's offensive.

Workers have responded to the attack by publishing a new issue of the *Workers' Voice*, a newsletter of the union members at both Rosen's Diversified plants. An article in the new issue points out that the bosses at Dakota Premium Foods have been asking for workers who have already given their Social Security number to the plant supervisors to come to the office to once again give their numbers. As reported in the newsletter, "One worker said, 'Why are they asking for our number if it is already in our applications when we first got hired and on our checks?'"

The article continues, "This is a concerted effort by the bosses of Rosen's Diversified

using the cops, INS, courts, and other governmental institutions to 1) bust and weaken the union at Long Prairie Packing; [and] 2) to set fear in the hearts and minds of us here at Dakota Premium Foods in order to prevent a successful fight for a union contract."

Miguel Olvera, a leader of the union at Dakota, told the newsletter: "The company realizes that they can't increase the velocity of the line like they once did, because workers are resisting." The article states that Local 789 president William Pearson was outraged by the INS actions and sent a letter of protest to the regional INS office.

Anniversary march planned

A June 15 march and rally from the Dakota Premium Foods plant to the union hall is being planned by Local 789. The action is called to celebrate the first anniversary of

the sit-down strike that launched the organizing drive and fight for a union contract. Last year workers refused to go back to work until the company met with workers representatives and discussed their demands to lower the speed of the line and to stop the practice of forcing workers to work while they are injured.

According to the *Workers' Voice*, the purpose of the action is to highlight the refusal of the company to recognize the union, despite a large majority vote for Local 789 last July. The company appealed the results of the election, first to the regional National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) and, failing there, to the national NLRB. Months have passed since the latest company appeal was filed. There has been no indication given to the union's lawyers when a judgment will be handed down.

Cops in Minneapolis kill two, sparking protest

BY YURI VILLASENOR AND TOM FISKE

MINNEAPOLIS—"No justice, no peace. Prosecute the police!" was one of the chants of 80 demonstrators during a May 26 protest here to demand justice in the case of Efrain Depaz, a young Mexican worker killed by the Minneapolis police a month earlier. The demonstrators also were demanding justice in the case of the April 3 cop killing of Demitres Sesler, a young Black worker.

The march was called principally by Fidel Depaz, the brother of Efrain Depaz, but struck a chord among many working people in the Twin Cities area who had heard about the killing.

Police made an attempt to keep the demonstration from happening. They called Fidel Depaz and told him the march could not occur because he did not have a permit. However, he was not intimidated. He and others built the action through announcements on three Spanish-language radio sta-

tions and the distribution of leaflets.

The demonstration began with a rally in St. Stephens church addressed by Fidel Depaz, Everett Sesler, the brother of Demitres Sesler, and other speakers.

"My brother did not deserve to die," stated Depaz. "Like many other workers from Latin America he came here to make a living and support his family. The cops say that they thought he had a gun in his car. But there was no gun. There are some witnesses who say that the policeman shot Efrain from a good distance. We demand equal justice in this case. The policeman should be prosecuted."

Everett Sesler spoke about the case of his brother. "I and my family have a lot of questions about what happened," he said. "My brother was on his way to work early in the morning. The police claim he did something wrong. They claim he got out of his car and reached for a gun. But the police did not provide us with a copy of the autopsy report. We had our own autopsy done. We

found out that my brother had been shot six times in the back. The police do not have a coherent account of what happened."

Additional speakers at the rally included representatives of the local Zapatista solidarity group, the Hotel and Restaurant Workers Union, and the Socialist Workers Party. After the rally the demonstrators proceeded to a nearby working-class shopping district near the local police station and marched for two hours. A dozen people joined the protest.

Many of the demonstrators were Black and Latino workers. Also participating was a contingent of members of the American Indian Movement Defense Patrol. Several people had been active in the fight for justice for Alfred Sanders, a Black worker who had been killed by the Minneapolis police a year ago. Also participating were members of People United against Police Brutality. A highlight of the demonstration in the shopping area was a performance by the local Aztec dancers.

Meat packers link up with broader resistance

BY RACHELE FRUIT
AND ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

DES MOINES, Iowa—Socialist packinghouse workers from 19 cities across the United States met here June 2-3. They discussed their involvement in the spread of union organizing drives by the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW), strikes and in-plant skirmishes by meat packers, and social struggles in urban and rural areas beyond the industry where they hold jobs—struggles that are having an impact on packinghouse workers.

Most of the participants in the meeting were members of the UFCW. Others were working in meatpacking plants not yet organized by a union. A meat packer from Vancouver, Canada, who is a member of the Communist League also took part.

John Benson, a UFCW meat packer at Harris Ranch Beef in Fresno, California, gave the main report to the meeting. He pointed to news articles two days before the gathering stating that the largest growth of income inequality took place during the 1990s, with the wages of the lowest 20 percent actually declining.

"This shows that the capitalist expansion was not generalized," he stated. "The capitalists increased their profits on our backs—based on production-line speedup, many more working injured, indignities inflicted by the bosses on the job every day, and the cutting of sick days and health insurance. These are the conditions that have sparked the resistance we see in the coal industry, in garment and textile, in packing and in broader social movements like the fight against police brutality and in defense of immigrant rights."

Socialist workers can take advantage of these openings by following the lines of proletarian resistance in city and countryside, well beyond developments in their unions or the plants they find themselves in at the moment, Benson said. "A timely response to these developments is crucial if we are going to take full advantage of them," he emphasized.

'What Is to Be Done?'

"We have to recognize the importance of our propaganda victories," Benson said. He referred to passages by Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin in *What Is to Be Done?*, one of the founding documents of the Bolshevik movement in Russia. "Class political consciousness can be brought to the workers only from without," Lenin said, "that is, only from outside the economic struggle, from outside the sphere of relations between workers and employers. The sphere from which alone it is possible to obtain this knowledge is the sphere of relationships of all classes and strata to the state and the government, the sphere of the interrelationship between all classes."

Success in expanding the readership of the revolutionary press and books among meat packers is one of the best gauges of the effectiveness of our political work and the degree to which socialist workers are able to carry out the crucial work Lenin described, Benson said.

The socialist meat packers decided to concentrate on meeting their goals in the *Militant* subscription drive the week immediately after their gathering and to organize other packinghouse workers to attend the June 14-17 Active Workers Conference at Oberlin, Ohio.

Steve Brennan, a packinghouse worker from Vancouver, Canada, described the interest that a layer of workers who recently went through a strike at Superior Poultry and a lockout at Fletcher Fine Foods have developed in both the *Militant* and Pathfinder books. Brennan said one worker has attended classes at the Pathfinder Bookstore in that city since the end of the Superior Poultry strike. Others have participated in Militant Labor Forum programs in that city.

Bill Sather reported that UFCW partisans are gearing up for a third attempt to win a union representation vote at the plant where he works near Boston. He said the initial impact of the defeat of a previous vote has passed and interest in organizing a union has picked up again.

The ongoing struggle by workers at Dakota Premium Foods in South St. Paul, Minnesota, to win union representation was described by Young Socialist members Bobbi Negrón and Lawrence Mikesh. Both are members of UFCW Local 789 at the plant. Workers at Dakota won a union election a year ago by a wide margin after a sit-down

strike, sparked by increased line speed and on-the-job injuries and abusive behavior by management. The local National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) rejected a company appeal of the vote and ratified the UFCW victory. But the company has refused to recognize the union and has stalled union certification through an appeal to the NLRB. Months have passed with no ruling on the case.

Negrón and Mikesh cited numerous in-plant skirmishes this year illustrating the continued strong support for the union and workers' determination to resist the company's effort to wear them out. These battles have included "the war of the stickers," with most workers in the kill floor displaying union stickers on their hard hats despite threats and demands by management for their removal. Mikesh noted that union supporters have stepped up activity in the company's kill floor, helping to set the pace for many others in the plant. This includes delegations of workers who marched to the company office to defend fellow unionists harassed by the bosses or forced to work while injured.

"We can't just focus on the skirmishes in the plant, however," Negrón said. "Linking up Dakota workers with struggles in other factories and social questions, like actions against police brutality, is essential to take the next steps in our fight for a contract."

The struggle at Dakota was strengthened recently when workers at Long Prairie Packing, in Long Prairie, Minnesota, stopped production in the boning department for an hour and a half, demanding that the bosses slow down the speed of the production line. The workers belong to UFCW Local 789, Negrón said, and the Long Prairie plant is owned by Rosen's Diversified Inc., the seventh-largest beef packer in the country. The company also owns the Dakota plant (see front page article).

Seven meat packers from Long Prairie bought subscriptions to *Perspectiva Mundial* during a recent visit by socialists to a trailer park near that factory, said Tom Fiske, a worker in another meatpacking plant in South St. Paul.

Socialists have made advances in getting established in packinghouses in Omaha, Nebraska. Two workers from the area described the UFCW effort to extend union organization to additional plants in that city—a center of the meatpacking industry—and the response they are receiving from workers to socialist propaganda.

In his report, Benson said that at their meeting in September, "socialist packinghouse workers concluded that following the lines of resistance would lead us to work in Long Prairie, and Omaha. But we didn't know it would also be on to Fort Morgan, Colorado."

A three-day strike by more than 1,200 workers at the Excel slaughterhouse in Fort Morgan took place at the end of February. Workers walked out to protest provisions of a contract offered by Excel, which included meager wage raises and increases in health insurance deductions from paychecks. They went on strike despite opposition by officials of the Teamsters union that organizes the plant. Police arrested two of the strike leaders after the union meeting where a majority approved the walkout, and charged them with "inciting a riot." Socialists visiting the area have found many of these workers are looking for a revolutionary perspective, explained a packinghouse worker from Omaha. A team of socialist miners, meat packers, and garment workers went to Fort Morgan and nearby Greeley, Colorado, in mid May. At plant gates and door-to-door visits, they sold 12 *Perspectiva Mundial* subscriptions to meat packers in the area.

Workers attracted to Cuban Revolution

Arrin Hawkins, a Young Socialists member and a meat packer in Chicago, was active in a committee that hosted a tour for Cuban youth leaders Yanelis Martínez and Javier Dueñas in April. She explained how she had encouraged co-workers to attend the meetings where the young Cubans spoke. Though they did not make it to any of the speaking engagements, "Three of these workers are now interested in taking part in the Cuba-U.S. Youth Exchange coming up in July," she said. "We will try to bring some of them to the Active Workers Conference in Ohio."

Participants from Pittsburgh described how the work of the Socialist Workers Party branch and the Young Socialists there was



Above, Militant/Joe Swanson; left, Militant/Kari Sachs
Above, workers at ConAgra packinghouse in Omaha, Nebraska, rallied for union last September. Left, immigrant rights march in October 2000 in New York City.



strengthened over the last two months by their involvement in a fight to reverse the firing of packinghouse worker Omari Musa.

Musa, who is Black, was hired at a plant in January through a temporary agency, in common with many meatpacking workers in the United States today. He was fired while on probation because of racist discrimination widespread at that company, the socialists concluded. In talking with civil rights organizations like the NAACP and others in the labor movement, socialists in Pittsburgh learned of other instances of job discrimination against workers who are Black in the area—especially in relatively better paying jobs from steel mills to packinghouses to the construction trade—and found new openings to collaborate with others fighting racism and defend-

ing affirmative action.

As a result of his fight to reverse the firing, Musa was encouraged to attend the national convention of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists (CBTU), which took place at the end of May in Orlando, Florida. Musa told the meeting here that issues discussed there included the struggle to defend voting rights for African Americans and support for framed-up members of the International Longshoremen's Association in Charleston, South Carolina, including the building of a June 9 Rally for Racial Justice and Workers' Rights in Columbia, South Carolina.

Two participants arrived the second day of the meeting from Cincinnati, where they had joined protest activities against the police killing of Timothy Thomas. Chris Hoepfner from Detroit described the sustained character of the protests in Cincinnati and the space that has been taken by workers and young people through the struggle. He reported great interest in socialist literature, including sales of eight *Militant* subscriptions the previous day at

Continued on Page 14

Pathfinder Fund surpasses goal!

BY BOB ADAMS
AND JANET POST

NEW YORK—Supporters of Pathfinder Press have raised \$102,782—\$2,782 over the goal—to make possible the continued publication and worldwide distribution of revolutionary literature containing the history and lessons of the modern working-class movement since its beginnings over 150 years ago.

Over the last several weeks, supporters in many cities held spirited fund-raising events to help put the drive over its \$100,000 goal. In Vancouver, British Columbia, 20 people attending a meeting and a barbecue generously contributed to the fund, putting supporters in that city over the top. The program discussed a number of struggles in the area, including the leadership being taken by immigrant workers in strikes and union organizing drives.

Pledges climbed to \$8,385 in Seattle at an event and reception that drew a packed house of 35 to the new Pathfinder bookstore, including several young people from Olympia, Washington.

Supporters in Birmingham, Alabama, went over their goal following a June 2 program at the Pathfinder bookstore. One of the speakers was Justin Hovey, a member of the Young Socialists in Tuscaloosa. Two students from the University of Alabama arrived after the meeting and one decided to go to the March and Rally for Workers' Rights in Columbia, South Carolina, the following weekend.

In Atlanta a program on "Cuba and the Coming American Revolution" featuring *Militant* staff writer Róger Calero led to a collection that put supporters there \$500 over their goal. Linda Joyce reported on the work of the international Pathfinder Reprint Project, which scored a victory in May by getting 50 percent of all Pathfinder titles formatted in digital form.

— Pathfinder Fund 2001 —			
Country/City	Goal(\$)	Paid	%
France	620	715	115%
United States			
Cleveland	1,250	1,828	146%
NY Garment Dist	4,000	5,292	132%
Los Angeles	6,000	7,855	131%
Twin Cities	4,000	5,118	128%
Upper Manhattan	3,300	3,855	117%
Atlanta	3,200	3,670	115%
Philadelphia	3,000	3,405	114%
Newark	3,000	3,320	111%
Grand Junction	2,400	2,580	108%
Houston	3,500	3,630	104%
Pittsburgh	6,000	6,188	103%
Chicago	6,500	6,702	103%
Des Moines	1,400	1,441	103%
Brooklyn	4,000	4,107	103%
Washington D.C.	2,200	2,251	102%
Birmingham	2,500	2,555	102%
Omaha	250	255	102%
Charlotte	2,700	2,750	102%
Miami	2,000	2,035	102%
Boston	3,750	3,800	101%
Seattle	8,000	8,065	101%
Detroit	2,500	2,510	100%
San Francisco	10,000	10,013	100%
Allentown	900	750	83%
Tampa	600	475	79%
Fresno	225	50	22%
Other		548	
U.S. Total	87,175	95,048	109%
Australia	900	973	108%
New Zealand	1,145	1,176	103%
Belgium	550	550	100%
Canada	5,000	4,884	98%
Sweden	250	151	60%
Iceland		40	
Int'l Total	95,020	102,782	103%
Int'l Goal	100,000	100,000	100%

'Never before had a fiercer battle be'

Cubans defending revolution with 'tenacious sacrifice' defeated 1961 U

In last week's issue, as part of marking the 40th anniversary of revolutionary Cuba's victory over a U.S.-organized invasion at the Bay of Pigs, the *Militant* reprinted excerpts from an account of the battle by Efigenio Ameijeiras. The excerpts were taken from the first two of a four-part series of articles, titled "Girón: The Shortest Battle," that appeared in the Cuban weekly magazine *Bohemia* in July 1989. Reprinted below are excerpts from the concluding parts of that series.

In less than 72 hours, forces from the Rebel Army, volunteer militias, air force, and police crushed an invasion force of 1,500 counterrevolutionaries, known as Brigade 2506. The battalion of combatants drawn from the Revolutionary National Police—led by Ameijeiras, with Samuel Rodiles as second in command—saw some of the heaviest fighting in the April 17–19, 1961, battle. The main group of mercenaries surrendered at Playa Girón, the name by which the battle is identified in Cuba.

The excerpts below describe the final day of the battle, April 19, 1961, and give an assessment of the Bay of Pigs events. The section published last week covered the period through the first two days of combat.

Ameijeiras, who was a commander in the Rebel Army during the revolutionary war against the U.S.-backed Batista dictatorship in the late 1950s, is currently a division general in Cuba's Revolutionary Armed Forces.

The translation, footnotes, material in brackets, and subheadings are by the *Militant*.



BY EFIGENIO AMEJEIRAS

The [revolutionary] column advancing from the Covadonga sugar mill toward San Blas, commanded by [Evelio] Saborit and [Félix] Duque, engages in heavy fighting in the southern part of the Zapata swamp. The attack is stopped, but the enemy's counterattack is turned back. With artillery and air support, and with help from the Yaguaramas column, which has tanks, the Covadonga column advances. The enemy is forced out of San Blas and retreats toward Bermeja. And with our forces pressing forward, they also have to retreat from Bermeja toward Playa Girón. Capt. [Víctor] Dreque is wounded in this battle.

After it is reported that the [police] battalion has taken Cayo Ramona, Commander Duque advances up to the junction of the highway leading to that site, and he falls into an ambush by the enemy, who was already preparing to retreat. The group of mercenaries, armed with machine guns, recoilless cannon, and bazookas is surprised to see this Rebel Army commander who, with no fear whatever, tells them:

"You all know you're beaten. You're better off surrendering. Approaching behind me is my battalion, which is part of thousands more men and a tank battalion. You have no doubt as to who is going to lose this war, right?"

They remain silent for a while—a few minutes that seem like centuries. By the time someone attempts to respond to Duque's bold, haughty words, it's too late. They all recognize that what Duque says is true, as true as the extraordinary personal courage of that man who was only coming to confirm the failure that had been apparent to them from the first day.

The columns from Yaguaramas, the Covadonga sugar mill, and Cayo Ramona gather in the Bermeja area for the final assault on Playa Girón....

In the morning the tank column under [Capt.] Joel Pardo advances toward San Blas to attack. When they arrive, there is confusion when they fire on San Blas. They are unaware that the Covadonga column has just occupied that position. Cooperation is soon reestablished before there are any casualties to regret. Together they continue the attack toward Bermeja, from which the enemy also retreats in great haste. Later they advance on Helechal, from which the enemy once again flees toward Playa Girón and takes Duque prisoner.

At the junction of the Cayo Ramona highway, another fatal encounter is on the verge of occurring between the forces of the 111th Battalion and the rebel column that has occupied Cayo Ramona. Here again, any confusion is prevented by Commander Saborit's intelligence, boldness, and composure....

Since dawn, the positions for attacking Playa Girón from Playa Larga have been taken. A few kilometers away, we have gathered a large number of battalions, tanks, and artillery. The mercenaries see our columns advancing on them with tanks and cannon. They are desperately pleading for air support.

Mercenary pilots refuse to fly

Because they have suffered such heavy losses, the mercenary pilots refuse to fly that day. So the Americans who were training them fly instead. They promise to provide escort from the aircraft carrier *Essex*. Five planes take off (with three of them apparently manned by Cubans). One of the Cubans had said that if he didn't see the

escort planes by the time he got to the Cayman Islands, he would turn around—and that's exactly what he did. Another apparently had mechanical problems and went back.

A big stroke of luck for our forces, which are already near Playa Girón, is the fact that, just as the planes with U.S. pilots were arriving, our planes arrived at the same time a few kilometers away from Cayo Guano. Two T-33 planes flown by [Enrique] Carreras and [Alvaro] Prendes had taken off from the San Antonio air base. Their mission was an offshore reconnaissance

battalion has been fighting furiously for about an hour. I get in the car with my escort and advance to where the flank fire seems to be coming from. I see our tanks about a kilometer away, with one of them spewing smoke—it's been hit. Some combatants are returning. When they see me gesturing to them, they return to the front. I stop the cars next to the tanks, and we advance on foot.

We fall into the middle of a firefight. We shield ourselves in the ditch. We advance toward another tank nearby. We see the crossfire coming from the coast, and more



Above, revolutionary Cuban combatants during U.S.-backed mercenary invasion. "Never before had a fiercer battle been waged in Cuba," Ameijeiras says. Speed was necessary to prevent enemy from establishing a beachhead, declaring themselves a government, and giving Washington pretext to involve other countries. Left, mercenaries taken prisoner by revolutionary forces at Bay of Pigs.



flight toward Cayo Guano. Carreras discovers a formation of four B-26 bombers. They agree on the attack and fire on the lead pair. In a single pass the planes are hit and fall to the water.

Another B-26 passes over our heads on the Playa Larga highway. In order to identify the mercenary planes, which are identical to ours, we've been told to look for a blue stripe painted on the belly. But when a plane appears, you shoot first and look later. Who's going to be looking for stripes at a time like this?...

The forward detachment of the police

crossfire coming from the left flank of the highway, where all we can see are trees. There is no question that they've prepared a good defense, from the coast all the way down the two highways from Girón, which at that point forks and makes a loop but, rather than entering Girón, merges with the road to San Blas. The coastal road is the one that goes into town. That's where Commander Samuel [Rodiles, second in command of the police battalion,] was fighting on the seashore....

They're firing a lot of bazookas, .50-caliber machine guns and recoilless cannon, backed by the tanks.

The example of Capt. Carbó

I'm given the sad news that Capt. [Luis Artemio] Carbó, head of the forward detachment, has been killed. Carbó and Capt. [José] Sandino had advanced, each with a column from the 116th Battalion, on both flanks of the highway.

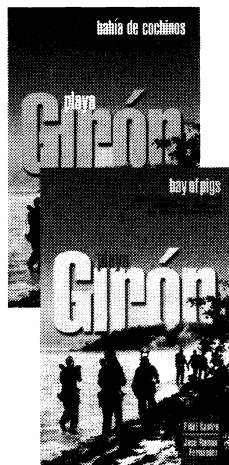
Before reaching the curve where the fork begins, Sandino veers left and Carbó veers right, close to the water. When they run into the enemy, Carbó shields himself and his men, and sends for tank support. The tanks advance but, when they reach the curve where Carbó is, he is hit by cannon fire, and the second tank on the left is also hit and catches on fire.

It's the mercenaries' last stand. If they lose the position, they will fall into our hands. They put up a dramatic fight, resisting the drive by our forces surging on the left and right flanks of the highway. Sandino's company, flanking on the left, is forced to cross some dense brush. A group goes out on the highway. They see people. They think it's their comrades with Carbó and our tanks. They run into the enemy. The mercenaries, with a tank and a .50-caliber machine gun on a truck, take some of them prisoner as the

New From Pathfinder

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. **Special offer \$15**



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

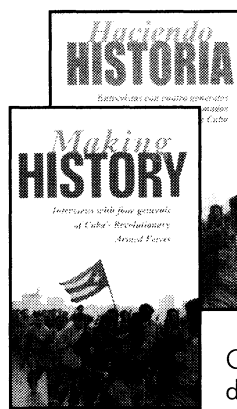
Interviews with Cuban generals Néstor López Cuba, Enrique Carreras, José Ramón Fernández, and Harry Villegas. Through the stories of these outstanding revolutionaries—three of them leaders of the Cuban forces at the Bay of Pigs that defeated the invaders within 72 hours—we can see the class

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en waged in Cuba'

.S.-organized invasion

rest withdraw while shooting.

Carbó sees a tank attack him, emerging from the brush and then hiding again. He stops and goes looking for a tank to support the attack. He is urging men and tank drivers to go forward. Suddenly they see him shudder and fall to the ground clutching his gun. They pick him up and have a hard time pulling the gun out of his hands. No wounds can be seen on his body. A bullet had entered his mouth and lodged in his brain. He is the highest-ranking infantry soldier of all those who die at Girón. He had been an outstanding guerrilla fighter in the liberation war, and was among those who performed the most feats on the Second Front.

I still remember when he came to see me very early that morning and I told him, "Carbó, I was waiting for you. You're the head of the forward detachment of the police battalion. Get ready, we're going to Girón."

He was very happy. Before leaving for the police station he went to his girlfriend's house and told her, "Listen, I can't wait any longer. When I get back from Playa Girón we're getting married."

We have a dozen dead and more than 20 wounded. A group of militia members from the 116th Battalion are taken prisoner. There is confusion in the area and many people are retreating. I urge the troops on. Two companies from the second echelon advance. Luckily, we have Samuel on the right flank with a company that manages to reach Carbó's positions and, in hand-to-hand combat, keeps the enemy from occupying that curve of death. The police fight to take away the supplies being dropped to them in parachutes from their planes....

From the left flank, that is, from the Girón loop, we are subjected to oblique fire backed by a .50-caliber machine gun. Unexpectedly, the companies advancing behind us start shooting and the curtain of fire nearly sprays us. We have to flatten ourselves against the side of a tank to get away alive—not from the mercenary fire, but from the fire of our own men in the rear guard.

A whirlwind of confusion

That's what these battles are like, a whirlwind of confusion. Today we lose our voices from shouting and relaying the message to the *compañeros* beyond the tanks to stop shooting. They keep shooting from the left flank with the .50-caliber machine gun, nearly over the tree tops. They seem to have it on a hill or on one of their command trucks. Capt. Marcelino [Sánchez] yells at the police, "Shoot the grenades over the trees, shoot, damn it! You can't see the enemy, but they're over there."

The tank next to us remains stopped, with another tank in front of it. I yell to the crew to turn the turret toward the left and fire a cannon at the machine gun nest. But in the din of the battle no one can hear me. In that whirlwind of shrapnel and explosions, I bang the butt of my gun on the tank's fender and they still don't hear me.

In the midst of the battle, running from death, some people are so shocked they don't fire a single shot and, worst of all, they are sometimes killed without doing anything. In war you almost never see the enemy. You shoot at anything that moves, and when nothing is moving you have to shoot by intuition—even against the silence, which can be the most dangerous thing of all. Luck is a factor in every war, and the vast majority of the soldiers who die never saw who killed them.

Just when I am feeling the most desperate, Sgt. Kindelán, who is in my escort, jumps on top of the tank and bangs on the turret with the butt of his gun. Kindelán acts fearlessly, and I think: not even a Chinese doctor will be able to save him at this point. Kindelán grows so tall in my eyes that to me he looks like Gulliver banging on the tank's turret with the butt of his gun.

To our joy, the tank crew member lifts the hatch and we're able to talk to him and point out the target. Kindelán jumps to the ground and we wait under the rain of fire. It

takes the tank a few seconds to turn the turret, seconds that to me seem like hours. It then fires its cannon and repeats firing, and then we no longer feel the crossfire from that flank.

I don't know where the volunteers find the courage to reach our battle lines. Their patriotism boosts our morale to keep fighting in that inferno of steel, fire, and sand. Watching civilian workers arrive there, leaving nearby their small private cars or delivery vehicles on which they had painted a Red Cross; watching them arrive there to help us remove the injured and the *compañeros* who had been blown to pieces by the shrapnel—we always remember that in astonishment. It is horrifying to watch half a man's torso being carried away. Another is taken away hanging from his limbs. His head is missing. Those volunteers are bigger men than we are....

Capt. [Conrado] Benítez arrives at the command post to tell me it isn't necessary to find peasants for the exploration, that Capt. Marcelino has taken a detour about a kilometer above the Girón highway and reached the airport area, and that no enemy forces can be seen in that area going toward Playa Girón. This is the best news all day. Marcelino wanted to go that way with his company, with some bazooka support. I tell Roberto Benítez that we still can't carry out any kind of movement, and that they should return to their position until the air attack passes. I think we can carry out that operation at dusk or maybe even at night, after properly relocating our forces and providing our men with ammunition.

What I never could imagine was that at this very time the head of the mercenary brigade had retreated from Playa Girón with 40 men, without even the knowledge of the second-in-command, who was fighting us at the fork in the road. They found out about the retreat by chance, after sending someone to Girón in search of reinforcements. They realized they were leaderless. Then they too abandoned their position and scattered. Some tried to escape by sea in the boats and rafts. But most of them fled inland. That was when our air force arrived to bomb Playa Girón.

At 3:30 p.m., Fidel leaves Point 1 for the zone of operations. At 3:45 p.m. the pilots take off from the San Antonio base: Carreras in a B-26, [Chilean pilot Jacques] Lagas in another B-26, [Gustavo] Bourzac in a Sea Fury, and Douglas [Rudd] in another, as well as Prendes in a T-33 and [Alberto] Fernández in another. It is the last massive attack that the air force will carry out at Playa Girón. At 5:30 p.m. Fidel is in Helechal preparing the final blow.

But Brigade 2506 is about to be routed. At that time their boats, newly regrouped, return only because they were promised naval and air support. In effect, they are accompanied by two U.S. destroyers. Here is the final conversation between the American directing the operation from the sea and his puppet on land:

"Gray [CIA agent Grayston Lynch], the enemy tanks have surrounded our positions. They're right here, very close to our positions. You can hear the cannon shots. I'm going to order retreat."

Gray pleaded with him not to do so: "Stay there, stay there, we're going there with everything we've got."

"How long will it take?" his puppet asked.

"Three or four hours."

"I can't hold up that long. You won't get here in time. I'm going to break the communications equipment right now."

Carreras returns with his plane giving off smoke due to a short circuit. Risking his life, he lands with the bombs intact. This too is a vital necessity since there are only 25 bombs left, barely enough for another day of fighting. With everyone's heart in their mouth, he makes the smoothest landing of his life, practically perching on the runway like a pelican on the water.

Meanwhile, the other planes have a feast at Playa Girón with their bombs and machine-gun fire. There is momentary confusion when some of them mistake the rafts



Bohemia/Raúl García

Illustration of combatant at Bay of Pigs, one of the drawings by Raúl García that accompanied series of articles by Efigenio Ameijeiras titled "Girón: The Shortest Battle," published in Cuban magazine *Bohemia* in 1989.

and boats carrying the fleeing mercenaries for another landing. They fire their machine guns at some of them and drop bombs at Playa Girón—around the airport area and near San Blas.

Revolutionary forces enter Playa Girón

It's nearly 5:00 p.m. when Pilón arrives along with other *compañeros*, giddy with happiness, to tell me that a group of prisoners whom the mercenaries had taken—from the 116th battalion as well as some civilians—reached our position carrying white flags, together with a group of mercenaries who surrendered. They report that the rest have fled in different directions. (The first one to advance on Girón with his men was Capt. Marcelino.)

At 5:30 p.m. we all arrive at Playa Girón. At the second curve, in the ditch behind a mound of sand, we see a destroyed tank and a dead mercenary on top. Up ahead is another destroyed tank, and farther still, a command truck with the platform holding a destroyed .50-caliber machine gun. In the ditch is a leg that had been cut off. The body might still be alive somewhere. Our eyes can't see the extent of the weaponry left abandoned in various places on the beach and in town, especially the cannon, mortars, and bazookas. There are three tanks and several trucks with .50-caliber machine guns.

There is an outburst of joy—immense joy seen on the faces of that sea of people entering Girón: police officers, civilians, militia members, rebels. It seemed that we had already forgotten about those who had died, since victory mitigates the pain somewhat. But at roll call, with the changing of the guard, we would once again ponder and reflect deeply on the large number of lives that were saved by the lives of those who sacrificed themselves so selflessly—19 dead and 50 injured. There were another 15 dead from the 116th Battalion, which speaks very highly of those 11 hours of fierce fighting under the constant rain of mortar fire, advancing on the ambushed tanks, cannon, and machine guns. How could we forget [19-year-old Wilfredo] Gonce, so young and yet already a veteran of the Second Front? And [21-year-old Rafael] Carini, who voluntarily climbed onto the trucks, as well as so many others who would make the list go on and on?

With nightfall approaching and our

troops yet to arrive from San Blas and Playa Morena, I tell Samuel to place all the troops on defense around the town's perimeter. No one is to move, in order to prevent confrontations among ourselves. The cannon shots are still whizzing over our heads.

Since I have no communications equipment, I travel personally to the Australia sugar mill to call Point 1. Practically the only one still there is [armed forces chief of staff] Commander Sergio del Valle, and when I get on the phone I tell him that Girón has fallen. He asks me if he can confirm the news. Laughing, I answer, "You're speaking to someone who has just left Playa Girón. I came flying over here in my car."

I suggest to him that we inform all our forces to avoid mix-ups. He congratulates me and replies that he will take it upon himself to inform everyone, mainly Fidel, who was in Helechal.

During the night, a tank comes from Helechal at full speed. Of course, almost everyone is nearly certain that it's one of ours, but we still have to take precautions. At night we can't see what kind of tank it is. Finally, Commander Samuel makes contact with the tank operator. The leader is *compañero* Joel Pardo, who had been told by Fidel not to stop until the tank's treads touched the water....



Conclusions

A full and fair assessment has yet to be made of the battle of Girón, of what that event meant to our country—that loss of lives that saved so many other lives, the extraordinary courage to achieve victory, to carry out the action against the time frame dictated by all tactical and strategic logic.

It's said that it was easy, but it was a tenacious sacrifice by our youth, who defeated on the ground a brigade with a battalion of tanks and several artillery groups. They sank their main boats and blew away more than 10 planes in less than 72 hours. This would seem astonishing to any impartial observer, but it had a logic borne of overwhelming necessity. The reality was an epidemic and we had to take drastic action to save the situation. The tumor of Brigade 2506 was amputated from those swamps. It can be said that victory was achieved on

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Bay of Pigs account

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the verge of the beginning of a larger war. Never before in the history of Cuba had a landing force been counterattacked so rapidly with tanks, artillery, and planes. Never before had so many lives and material resources been saved.

Time element crucial in victory

One might rightly question why we attacked them frontally on such narrow strips of land, giving them the opportunity to inflict so many casualties on us. From that point of view it seems like a terrible mistake. But if we consider other strategic factors of a political nature, we can fully see our need to take advantage of the time element. Never before had the revolution experienced a more dangerous moment—nor would it ever again, not even during the [October 1962] missile crisis nor with Mr. Reagan's recent Caribbean paranoia¹.

They could not be allowed to consolidate a beachhead, because then they could have landed the Cuban puppet government—which was practically being held hostage in the United States—at the Girón airport or by boat. If that had happened, they would have started blowing hot air at the Organization of American States to seek a consensus for an intervention under the cover of other flags.

But there was something worse still. It's now known that if the mercenaries had held out another day or for just four more hours,

¹ Through the late 1980s, the U.S. government carried out a war drive in Central America and the Caribbean—including the U.S.-organized mercenary "contra" army against the Nicaraguan revolution, efforts to overthrow the government of Panama, military pressure against revolutionary Cuba, and a stepped-up military presence in the Caribbean in the wake of the 1983 U.S. invasion of Grenada.

the boats from their flotilla would have arrived under the escort of U.S. ships to disembark again. This operation would most likely have led to an escalation of the conflict and we might still be firing shots.

For these and other reasons that are part of our Cubanness, the order was to be on top of them at all times, not even giving them time to sleep. Never before had a fiercer battle been waged in Cuba, neither in the independence wars, nor in the campaign against the [Batista] tyranny. The order was carried out in that strange setting. The swamp is a quiet and impressive place—such as its iron ebonies—a place where Christopher Columbus mistook the manatees for mermaids. Walking around there is like grinding your eyes with the sandy wind.

Defending gains of the revolution

There, in its still, murky waters, the best of the Cuban youth came together, as if arriving to sacrifice themselves at the altar of the homeland. There they laid down their roots with uncommon heroism, in contrast to the historic poverty of the charcoal makers of the swamp, who could not understand why other Cubans would want to destroy the only government in the world that had built highways, schools, hospitals, and masonry houses, while students from the cities were working hard on a literacy campaign. It doesn't matter—it will always be that way, there will always be people who don't want to look at anything but their own narrow interests.

The terrain in the Zapata swamp does not lend itself to guerrilla warfare. In the mid-1960s, several guerrilla groups were defeated in this area without the use of major resources, because it is a terrain that greatly favors the defense. They simply never thought about the possibility of failure and therefore had no contingency plans. Their arrogance allowed them to



Wreckage of mercenary airplanes with Cuban insignia downed by anti-aircraft artillerymen during U.S.-backed Bay of Pigs invasion. Invaders tried to make it seem that Cuban pilots had turned on the revolution.

think only about another weekend Guatemala operation.² My goodness, not even an evacuation plan!

Actually, if they had made a good effort, they might have at least held out overnight. They had to concentrate on a compact arc of defense one kilometer inland, which would have allowed them to fight in three directions. But they had lost faith; from the first day they were hoping that the Americans would bail them out. I don't know how long they would have been able to hold out. But to tell the truth, the final assault that Fidel was preparing was going to be a hurricane. We were going to train our cannon directly on them, send the battalions in waves, and drop on their heads the 25 bombs that the air force still had in clusters. Still, their only duty was to resist, because they still had weapons and ammunition.

In [the Angolan town of] Cangamba,³ a FAPLA brigade [in 1983] was besieged together with a company of Cuban advisers, five battalions with armored cars and artillery deployed in three rings of defense. The enemy concentrated all its artillery and thousands of men. After one month of combat, the brigade had been decimated. The only ones still fighting in the inner ring of defense were the company of Cubans, with heavy losses, and the general staff of the brigade. No water, no food. On some nights the volunteers would steal water from the enemy. A week later they were still resisting. They took water from the radiators, they ate toothpaste and drank urine, but they continued resisting. The ring of defense had shrunk to the size of a baseball field. Under enemy mortar and antiaircraft fire, helicopters parachuted them ammunition and food.

Unable to help them by land, a company landed in the rear guard, fighting its way forward and joining them. With the help of the air force, the enemy was forced to retreat on the ninth day. One or another individual went crazy from killing so many attackers. But the Cuban and Angolan combatants were fighting for freedom—with no quotation marks. When the battle was over, it looked like a hurricane had hit the town. There were so many craters from the howitzers that it looked like the surface of the moon.

Mercenaries lacked moral values

I think the mercenaries at Girón must have fought, but they lacked the most important thing—moral values. Without moral values there is nothing. Everybody dies, but not everyone dies with moral values.

The things that would happen to us were

² In 1954, seeking to crush broadening political and social struggles in Guatemala accompanying a limited land reform initiated by the government of Jacobo Arbenz that affected the holdings of United Fruit and other U.S. companies, mercenary forces backed by Washington invaded the country. Arbenz refused to arm those ready to resist and resigned. A right-wing military dictatorship took over.

³ Tens of thousands of Cuban volunteers fought in Angola alongside troops from the Angolan armed forces, FAPLA, to defend Angola from attack by the South African apartheid regime between 1975 and 1990. Ameijeiras served an internationalist combat mission in Angola in 1984.

grotesque and at times laughable. We would start firing on the enemy without lighting the fuses in the grenades. Some of the tank drivers were teenagers who had absolutely no tactical training. Many hadn't even had more than two weeks of courses. They only knew how to start the tank and make it go backward and forward. Sometimes you had to yell at them: "Come on, damn it, don't you see they're firing, fire that way, damn it!" "I don't... I don't know how to shoot." "Bam!" All you could do was shut the hatch and not go crazy. Just keep going.

The tanks attacked with their extra fuel tanks attached, and there was one instance where our own infantry set them on fire. Also, some tank drivers were so naive that they turned on their headlights during a nighttime battle. The air force was not sent to support the infantry attack. On the last day we asked for ammunition for 122-mm. howitzers. At the last minute we received a truckload of mortar ammunition.

Sometimes we shot at our own planes and other times they shot at us. We forgot to be more guerrilla-like. But to tell the truth, guerrilla fighters are never in a hurry. We were in a hurry. Time was of the essence for us. Carrying out a frontal attack, we moved several battalions in a column with tanks and artillery. They always fought under ambush. Would they have attacked like this had it been the other way around? What would have happened if they had had to go help their troops that were surrounded at Playa Larga? This operation, which failed on the first day, was not carried out the next day because they abandoned Playa Larga. In a sense their fleeing worked out well for them. Otherwise the battle would have ended 24 hours earlier.

This chronicle does not go beyond a summary of the police battalion and the Battle of Girón. I apologize for all the events that are missing. These are preliminary notes for writing a book that will cover this historic episode in every aspect: military, political, social, and economic.

Plenty has already been published. In fact, the enemy has written more about some aspects than we have. If they had won, who could have put up with their lecturing? To write a highly ambitious book we need, above all, the testimony of the participants—of all the forces as well as civilian volunteers whose feats have yet to be recorded in depth. It's not too late for us to do so—more than 20 years later, we can be more objective. May each one write or tell their testimony without prejudices, and that will be the best basis for putting together a complete book on Girón. It should be dedicated to today's youth, in honor of those—themselves young—who died for them on the red sands of Girón.

What was the main factor in defeating Brigade 2506 so rapidly? I am always asked this question, and while it may sound a touch metaphysical, you wrack your brain pondering so many factors, both internal and external. You have to answer without romanticism, without prejudice, although reality can also be wonderful, as [Cuban poet] Fina García Marruz says.

As I see it, the decisive factors were Fidel's leadership and the courage of our men. This combination of patriotism and intelligence reflected a new ethic, based on the moral values of the revolution.

Socialist candidate for New Jersey governor condemns police killing

BY NANCY ROSENSTOCK AND AMY HUSK

NEWARK, New Jersey—Kicking off her campaign for governor of New Jersey on the Socialist Workers Party ticket, Kari Sachs and other campaign supporters joined a May 19 rally against police brutality in nearby Irvington where Bilal Colbert, a 29-year-old Black man, was shot and killed by a cop last month. In a speech to the rally, Sachs, a meat packer and member of the United Food and Commercial Workers union, demanded the authorities indict and jail the police officer.

Sachs said the socialist campaign is also giving support to several strikes by workers in the state, including at the Dunkin Donuts distribution center in Swedesboro and Pepsi Bottling Company in Piscataway.

Sachs pointed to a new antiunion assault being organized by the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, which has given the go-ahead for a nonunion outfit to begin operations at Port Newark. The socialist candidate and several supporters joined a rally of Teamsters members at the Tosco/

Phillips refinery who are standing up to attacks on their union by the oil bosses.

"The Democrats and Republicans, along with the employers, are pressing forward with their assault on working people," she said at a campaign forum here May 25. "For example, the number of children in New Jersey living in poverty grew by 15 percent over the last year. In the factory where I am employed workers started at \$11.00 an hour 15 years ago. Today we start at \$7.00," said Sachs. "More and more workers are forced to live at or below the poverty level."

"Our campaign raises with workers, farmers, and youth resisting this assault today the need for a revolutionary struggle to replace the capitalists' government with one of workers and farmers. We can and need to follow the example of workers and farmers in Cuba who threw out a repressive dictatorship in 1959, established a government of their own, and went on to replace the capitalist system, which promotes racism, wars, and brutality, with one based on human solidarity," said Sachs.

Election laws in New Jersey require candidates who are not running as Democrats or Republicans to collect 800 signatures by June 26 to be on the ballot.

Supporters of the socialist campaign have a goal of collecting 1,600 signatures, twice the requirement, and will be campaigning throughout the state.

Out of the crowd of 75 at the May 19 rally against police brutality, 54 people signed the petitions to place Sachs on the ballot.

One participant approached the socialist candidate at the end of the rally to find out how he could stay in touch with the campaign. As a first step he decided to subscribe to the *Militant* newspaper.



Militant/Nancy Rosenstock

Kari Sachs, Socialist Workers candidate for governor of New Jersey, speaking May 19 at rally against cop killing of Bilal Colbert, in Irvington, New Jersey.

Cubans celebrate 40th anniversary of farmers organization

BY JOEL BRITTON

HAVANA—Thousands of Cubans joined leaders of the National Association of Small Farmers (ANAP) on Farmers Day, May 17, here to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the founding of the organization.

ANAP was formed in 1961 through the incorporation of various farmers' and ranchers' organizations and more than 100,000 small producers who gained title to their land through agrarian reform. That defining act of the Cuban Revolution was a result of the armed insurrection and mass popular uprising that toppled the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista in 1959 and put in place a workers and farmers government.

ANAP organizes farmers who operate in two kinds of voluntary cooperatives. Credit and Service Cooperatives are associations of farmers who maintain their individual farms but pool efforts to organize supplies and sell their produce. Agricultural Production Cooperatives are made up of farmers who combine their land and machinery and farm collectively. ANAP also organizes independent farmers. Small farmers in Cuba possess about 20 percent of the arable land and account for about one-third of the total agricultural production.

Workers and farmers alliance

The Rancho Boyeros Fairgrounds was full for this May 17 commemoration on a sunny Thursday morning. Banners proclaimed support for Cuba's socialist revolution and the farmers' confidence in ongoing efforts to strengthen their alliance with the working class, the motor force of the revolution and the basis for its survival in the face of Washington's unrelenting drive against it.

One banner read: "Forty years with the socialist revolution!" Another: "The farmers will continue to fight!" and "More united than ever: workers and farmers!" Yet another: "Our patriotic duty: produce for the people with unity, dignity, and patriotism—we shall win!"

The featured speaker was Orlando Lugo Fonte, the president of ANAP. He reviewed gains that have come with the revolution, including winning Cuba's independence, ending exploitation of working people, and solving, through the major agrarian reforms, "one of the main points of the program of Moncada." He was referring to Cuban president Fidel Castro's "History Will Absolve Me" courtroom speech in 1953 in his own defense against charges arising from the attack he led on the Moncada garrison in Santiago de Cuba. In the speech, which was widely distributed and became a basic programmatic statement of the July 26 Movement, Castro explained the revolutionary laws that would have been proclaimed had the attack been successful. The Agrarian Reform Law of May 17, 1959, implemented this program. A second wave of the deep-going agrarian reform, which set a maximum limit on holdings of 167 acres, was enacted into law in 1963.

Lugo Fonte enumerated the social and economic gains made by farmers during 42 years of revolution—noting "the high political culture of Cuba's farmers." He pointed out, "Sure markets and fair prices dignify the lives of farmers."

Among the other leaders of the Cuban Revolution present were José Ramón Machado Ventura, member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party; Melba Hernández, participant in the 1953 assault on the Moncada garrison; and Ulises Rosales del Toro, the head of the Ministry of Sugar.

Juan José Sarachu, president of Centro Cooperativista Uruguayo (Uruguayan Cooperative Farmers Center), gave greetings

on behalf of farmers in his country.

Students from agriculture schools made up a spirited section of the audience. Following the speeches, they and the farmers and workers present cheered on their favorite contestants in various rodeo competitions, and enjoyed performances of traditional country music.

A plaque was unveiled at the entrance to the fairgrounds commemorating the founding of ANAP at that site on May 17, 1961.

Raúl Castro, minister of the Revolutionary Armed Forces and first vice president of the Council of State and Council of Ministers, presided over a ceremony in which the national leadership of ANAP gathered on the evening of this year's Farmers Day to honor about a dozen exemplary farmers. This event capped several days of meetings and celebrations marking ANAP's 40th anniversary.

On May 16, the Nordic Friendship Agricultural Production Cooperative, named in tribute to collaboration between working people in Cuba and several Nordic countries, hosted a farmers dinner. The event included international guests from Mexico, Uruguay, and Canada. In addition, several U.S. participants in the Fourth International Meeting on Organic Agriculture attended, including Randy Jasper, a Wisconsin dairy farmer who was present at the ANAP congress in May 2000 and Carolyn Lane, a member of Food First—the Institute for Food and Development Policy.

The host farmers explained their cooperative is made up of 239 farmers, 55 of them women, and covers nearly 1,400 acres. Established 20 years ago, this cooperative raises a wide range of vegetables and fruit under contract to the state, explained cooperativist Onel Tamayo Pupo.

"All are equal here," Tamayo said, explaining how any surplus after their costs of production are covered is divided up among the coop members. They are now averaging 2,000 pesos per month for each member after all expenses are paid, an income well above average in Cuba.

'Socialism is the solution'

"Socialism is the solution to the problems of mankind," Tamayo said. He cited Cuba's 42 years of revolution, and noted that the revolution had prevailed in spite of all the "difficulties and limited resources," especially in the last decade. He was referring to what Cubans call the Special Period of extreme shortages of food, fuel, energy, and spare parts that resulted from the collapse of trade and aid following the shattering of the Stalinist regimes in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe and the tightening of the U.S. economic embargo.

"But we have still been able to do this," he said, pointing to the surrounding fields lush with spring crops. He noted that Cuba has had to develop tourism as a part of what has been "necessary to solve our economic problems." Tamayo said that 1994 was a low point, for the Cuban economy, "but now we are making some steps forward, including exporting medicines for those with AIDS and meningitis."

Tamayo, who is the secretary of the some two dozen members of the Communist Party at this cooperative, said that a dozen of the young members of the cooperative belong to the Union of Young Communists, and that more than 40 serve in the militia.

Maria del Carmen Barroso, director of International Relations for ANAP, introduced international guests. The elected head of the cooperative made a brief welcoming presentation, and a party that included informal discussion, food and refreshments, music, and dancing continued until after midnight.

Several hundred participants gathered May 17–19 at the Havana Libre hotel for the Fourth International Meeting on Organic Agriculture sponsored by the Cuban Association of Agricultural and Forestry Technicians (ACTAF). Many were agronomists and academics, and some were farmers. Participants came from Cuba, Latin America, Europe, North America, and Asia.

Many of the presentations at the conference centered on how Cuban farmers, supported by the country's revolutionary lead-



Militant/Joel Britton

Some participants in events marking anniversary of Cuba's National Association of Small Farmers visited cooperatively organized urban gardens in Havana. Among those present was Wisconsin dairy farmer Randy Jasper, center in checkered shirt.

ership, responded in the early 1990s to a sharp drop in the availability of chemical fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides, as well as fuel and parts needed to keep machinery running. Workers and farmers turned decisively to the use of substitutes for fertilizers and pesticides. For example, they began using bagasse, a by-product of sugar production, as fertilizer.

The nationwide effort included the development of the "Farmer-to-Farmer" program by ANAP in half of Cuba's 14 provinces to date, in which farmers are organized to visit other farmers in order to share their methods of producing crops and animal husbandry. These visits supplement the work of university-trained agronomists and veterinarians. Some of these farmers participated in the organic farming conference.

A number of participants arrived several days early for pre-conference activities that included visits to Cuban farms and agriculture-related institutions, including Havana-area vegetable, fruit, and herb farms and gardens, and a large farmers market.

The group toured three large urban gardens organized as Basic Units of Cooperative Production (UBPC), whose self-employed producer members are affiliated with the Cuban trade union federation. UBPC members grow beets, lettuce, radishes, green onions, and cucumbers in the gardens, a portion of which were on sale to residents in the area from nearby kiosks.

Laritz, 32, a former communications en-

gineer who has worked at the state-owned High Yield Organoponic garden for two years, told visitors that she had never studied agriculture, but chose to work there because it was close to where she lives and where her young child is cared for by a baby-sitter. She explained that the work at the garden is shared by 14 members who work six days a week from 6:00 in the morning to 6:00 in the evening with a two-hour lunch break and two 15–20-minute breaks each morning and afternoon. Members each get two weekends off per month. Laritz said that 50 percent of the farm's proceeds after all expenses are paid goes to the state, and the rest is divided among the members. They receive 225 pesos per month as a minimum, and average 634 pesos a month in bonuses, adding up to an income well above average in Cuba.

At the UBPC Vivero Organopónico Alamar, the director explained that as in other large urban gardens they began using substitutes for chemical pesticides and fertilizers by necessity during the Special Period, but now it is by choice. The UBPC was formed for the most part on unused land. Its 18 members work from 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. with a one-hour lunch and two breaks. Six retired workers work part-time, receiving income that supplements their social security benefits.

Joel Britton is a meat packer and a member of the United Food and Commercial Workers union in Chicago.

Forum in Iowa hears report from dairy farmer on visit to Cuba

BY TOM FISKE

DES MOINES, Iowa—"Cuba is a different society. I just visited Cuba for the second time. This time I was able to notice more than before. It really starts to sink in that this is the way society can be." This is how Randy Jasper, a Wisconsin dairy farmer, began his presentation here at a June 3 Militant Labor Forum titled, "Cuba and the Coming American Revolution." The event took place the evening of a meeting here of socialist workers who work in the meatpacking industry (see article on page 7).

Jasper is a member of Family Farm Defenders and the American Raw Milk Producers Pricing Association. He and his family have 80 cows and raise corn on 700 acres, 500 of them rented. Joel Britton, a leader of the Socialist Workers Party and a packing-house worker and member of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 100A in Chicago, was also on the panel.

Britton and Jasper both joined a one-week delegation to Cuba in May in order to attend the 40th anniversary activities of the founding of the National Association of Small Farmers of Cuba (ANAP) and an international conference on organic agriculture.

"Cuban farmers are very proud of what they do," Jasper pointed out, "and others in the country respect their contribution. For example, there is a national Farmers Day in

Cuba." Jasper noted that Cubans follow developments in U.S. politics. "Many Cuban working people know that U.S. farmers are losing their land," he said. "They are aware that food production in the United States is dominated by the major companies that seek to increase their profits."

Jasper pointed to the importance of the September 4–7 World Food Sovereignty Conference, sponsored by ANAP in Havana. "Food is being used now as a weapon. It's not what food should be used for. Food is a right. According to a 1996 figure, 800 million people in the world are hungry," Jasper said, while small farmers are being pushed to the edge by the cost-price squeeze imposed on them by the giant food business corporations. "I get paid less to produce food than it costs me to produce it," he noted.

"It's important that groups send representatives to the conference, including farm groups, labor unions, consumer groups, and so on. From Cuba we can learn a tremendous amount about the possibilities of building a different society that puts needs before profits. For example, they have a national health-care plan. In the United States 30 percent of health care expenses are for administration," Jasper said.

"The U.S. government is afraid of the example of Cuba," Jasper concluded. "They fear the impact of its example on the working people of other countries."

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Florida spy trial attacks democratic rights

Continued from front page

ing” right-wing Cuban-American groups in Miami that seek to overthrow the revolutionary government of Cuba. The charge of “conspiracy to commit murder” was added later.

Five of the defendants eventually pleaded guilty to some of the charges and one testified at the trial against the five defendants.

Brothers to Rescue shutdown

The federal prosecutors’ case indicated how Washington can concoct documentation to frame up opponents of its policies. It rested on: 1) information allegedly contained in supposedly encoded messages the prosecution claimed the FBI copied off the hard drives of computers in the defendants’ residences; 2) shortwave radio transmissions the government claimed took place between the Cuban government and the defendants; and 3) the testimony of several of the original defendants who decided to cooperate with the frame-up to get their sentences reduced. No evidence was ever produced of “military secrets” supposedly stolen by the “spies.”

The “conspiracy to commit murder” charge was made up of whole cloth. Gerardo Hernández allegedly provided Cuban authorities with flight plans of the four Brothers to the Rescue pilots whose planes were downed by the Cuban air force. A number of witnesses called by the defense offered ample evidence that these rightists repeatedly violated Cuban airspace and refused to heed warnings to head back before they were downed near Havana.

The defense argued that the five men on trial were seeking information, all of which was available to the public, about the terrorist Cuban-American groups in Miami in order to prevent further attacks on Cuba. William Norris, attorney for one of the defendants, said, for example, that “within the exile community here there exist extremists

[trying] to destabilize the Cuban government, and [their] acts have effectively been planned, financed, and carried out by organizations or individuals in the United States. [My client] states he was in Miami investigating these individuals and organizations.”

Planes did violate Cuban airspace

Retired U.S. Air Force colonel George Buchner testified that evidence in the records of the U.S. National Security Agency shows the Brothers to the Rescue planes were well within Cuban airspace when they were shot down. This contradicted earlier claims by Washington, and by a United Nations Security Council report, that the planes were shot down over international waters.

Buchner and other such witnesses stated that Washington was not only aware of the plans by Brothers to the Rescue pilots but had received warnings by the Cuban government to take steps to stop these flights. To no avail.

José Basulto—the central leader of Brothers to the Rescue who turned back his plane

in 1996 and was not pursued by the Cuban air force—was also called to the stand by the defense. He initially tried to portray himself as a “nonviolent resister” to “Castro’s tyranny” and a follower of Martin Luther King and Mohandas Gandhi. Under questioning he conceded “he broadly supports exile groups bent on overthrowing Fidel Castro violently,” reported the *Miami Herald*.

In the aftermath of the trial, U.S. officials are threatening further “investigation” of supposed spies for Cuba here, trying to send a chill down the spine of all supporters of the Cuban Revolution or simply opponents of Washington’s policies here. U.S. Attorney Guy Lewis was quoted in the June 9 *Miami Herald* as saying, “There have been spies among us. Let the verdict serve notice, though, [that] we will not stand idly by and allow any foreign government to wreak its havoc upon our way of life.”

Right-wing Cuban-American leaders here have picked up on the government’s line. “Yes, Castro is among us,” declared Joseph García, head of the Cuban-American National Foundation (CANF). The trial is proof,

he said, that it is not “paranoia” on the part of Cuban rightists to think there are secret agents of Cuba here. The CANF and José Basulto have both called for the indictment of Castro for murder in the 1996 incident.

Pretense of a ‘fair trial’

The courtroom proceedings here were carefully orchestrated by the government to give the appearance of a “fair trial” and to continue to advance Washington’s slanders against Cuba. The major media here hammered away at this theme. An editorial in the June 9 *El Nuevo Herald*, for example, stated, “Despite having attacked the United States...Castro’s agents got full protection of the law.

“It was a clear, fair trial. Just the opposite of what would have happened had the trial taken place in Havana.” The *Miami Herald*, for its part, called the trial’s outcome “a well-earned victory for the federal prosecutors and for the country. As important, it gave the lie to defense claims that they were Cuban ‘patriots’ trying to protect their country against Cuban exiles.”

Socialist youth build international events

BY ROMINA GREEN

NEW YORK—“Young people involved in struggles in the United States who consider themselves anti-imperialist and revolutionary will be able to link up with other like-minded youth from around the world at the 15th World Festival of Youth and Students in Algeria this summer,” said Young Socialists leader Jacob Perasso at a Militant Labor Forum here June 8.

Perasso reported to the forum on the preparatory meeting for the festival that took place May 26–28 in Algiers, the capital of

Algeria, where the festival will be held. This will be the first Youth Festival to take place on the African continent, he said. Youth organizations across Africa and the Middle East are planning to send sizable delegations to the August 8–16 gathering.

Perasso said YS members are reaching out to workers and youth in a number of struggles across the country, such as the unionists at Hollander Home Fashions in California and Pennsylvania who struck the company to demand increased wages, a pension, and dignity on the job. YS members joined the rally of 5,000 in Columbia, South Carolina, June 9 to demand the state drop its frame-up charges against the Charleston Five. In the midst of building these and similar fights, noted Perasso, YS members are introducing people to the Youth Festival as well as the July 22–30 Cuba-U.S. Youth Exchange.

The youth exchange, to be held in Havana at the invitation of student and youth organizations in the Caribbean country, will be an opportunity to have a dialogue with Cuban youth and a firsthand chance to talk with working people of a country that defeated U.S. imperialism for the first time in the Americas. A student from Hostos College who attended the forum said he is plan-

ning to help publicize the youth exchange at his campus, including bringing a speaker on Cuba to build up interest among students in the exchange.

Members of the Young Socialists participated in the Vieques contingent at the Puerto Rican Day Parade here June 10. Joining the contingent were workers and youth from the Vieques Support Group; a delegation from the San Romero church; the Palestinian solidarity organization Al-Awda; and many other groups. Al-Awda backs the right of Palestinians to return to their homeland and has linked up with the anti-imperialist struggle of the Puerto Rican people.

Among the contingent’s energetic chants in English and Spanish were, “Free, free Puerto Rico! Free, free Palestine!” Tinesha Mayers, a 17-year-old high school student from the group Urban Mindz, is organizing to attend a United Nations conference in South Africa on racism later this year in order “to unite with different groups and different people to make change all over the world.” Mayers, other members of Urban Mindz, and members of Al-Awda expressed interest in attending the Youth Festival and the Youth Exchange and asked the YS to send a speaker to an upcoming meeting to describe the events.

Gov’t executes McVeigh, prepares more

MAURICE WILLIAMS

The U.S. government executed Timothy McVeigh with a lethal poison injection June 11 at the federal penitentiary in Terre Haute, Indiana. He was the first federal inmate to be put to death since 1963 and the 717th person on death row to be executed since capital punishment was reinstated in 1976.

The killing was postponed for one month after FBI officials admitted they withheld 4,449 pages of documents concerning the case that should have been given to McVeigh’s lawyers before his trial. The revelation came six days before his originally scheduled May 16 execution. Despite this attack on his right to a fair trial the Justice Department pressed ahead with the state-sanctioned murder and two courts refused to stay his execution.

The rightist McVeigh was convicted for the 1995 bombing of the Oklahoma City federal building in which 168 people were killed. McVeigh had appealed his conviction citing pretrial publicity and the government’s failure to turn over relevant documents. The U.S. government prepared an elaborate public spectacle of the execution, which included a private viewing through closed circuit television at the Federal Transfer Center in Oklahoma City for nearly 200 relatives of those killed in the blast.

After admitting his role in the blast McVeigh became a useful target for Washington to press its campaign to step up fed-

eral executions. In 1994 the Clinton administration expanded the federal death penalty under a crime bill to include more than 60 additional offenses.

McVeigh’s death paves the way for executions of the other 19 federal death row inmates. About a week after this execution, another inmate, Juan Raul Garza, is scheduled to be killed in the Terre Haute death chamber. Garza is among 17 Blacks and Latinos facing execution by the federal government.

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—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

NEW JERSEY

Newark

Justice for the Charleston Five. Speaker: Don Mackle, member, United Food and Commercial Workers Local 174, Socialist Workers Party, a participant in June 9 rally in Columbia, South Carolina. Fri., June 22, 7:30 p.m. 506 Springfield Ave. Tel: (973) 643-3341.

NEW ZEALAND

Christchurch

The Rearming of New Zealand Imperialism. Fri., June 22, 7:00 p.m. Gloucester Arcade, 129 Gloucester St. Tel: (3) 365-6955.

And fund more border cops?—To aid business honchos and big-time athletes from other countries get here in a hurry, the feds are of-



Harry Ring

fering visas issued in 15 days for a \$1,000 fee. They said this doesn't favor the rich because the extra income will help them process ordi-

nary applications more quickly.

The march of civilization—"The use of electric stun belts to control verbal courtroom outbursts by defendants is unconstitutional, but the devices can be used if there is a security threat, a federal appeals court ruled in San Francisco."—May 31 news item.

'Cultural war' spreading? 'Mothers will take brunt of welfare cuts'—headline, the *Times*, London.

How about scrapping tuition?—More than 500 students at the University of Central England, in Bir-

mingham, face eviction for not paying tuition fees. A university spokesperson said, "The situation is representative of what's happening up and down the country. It's unfortunate but it's the final course of action."

P.S.—A small, embargoed country, revolutionary Cuba provides tuition-free university education for all.

What price liberalism?—We reported the apparent confusion of a *Los Angeles Times* reporter who felt that the spiraling retail price of coffee while the wholesale price was plummeting seemed to deny the logic of capitalism. Missing from

our edition was the proposal of Oxfam, the liberal global aid organization. It suggested a one-time destruction of 1 million tons of coffee, which would limit the world supply and, natch, nudge up the price. And no imperialist sweat.

The way to go—If your income is \$15 million to \$18 million, and you fit the profile, you may be invited to the racetrack at Summit Point, W. Virginia, to check out the new Bentley sedan. (Divorced from Rolls Royce, Bentley is promoting a new look.) Accompanied by a pro, you can hit it up to 170 m.p.h. For housing there are Bentley RVs, the size

of a Greyhound bus, but classier. Still hand-made, the Bentley goes for up to \$360,000. If you like the RV, it's yours for a million.

They thought it was Halloween?—A New York reader sent us a clipping from Teamster Local 237 *Newsline*, which picked it up from the *Washington Post* and *Slate* magazine. They reported on a Republican news conference in Washington to promote Bush's reward-the-rich tax program. It had a batch of "workers" on hand to cheer them on. The catch was that they were lobbyists decked out in hard-hats, retail clerks smocks, farm overalls, etc.

Origins of communist movement in United States

Printed below are excerpts from the first chapter of *The History of American Trotskyism 1928-38*, by James P. Cannon, titled "First Days of American Communism." The book, which is based on a series of 12 public talks presented by Cannon in 1942, recounts the challenges and steps forward in building a proletarian party in the United States over this 10-year period. Copyright © 1944 by Pathfinder Press, reprinted by permission.

BY JAMES P. CANNON

In reading the literature of the Trotskyist

BOOK OF THE WEEK

movement in this country, you frequently noted the repeated statements that we have no new revelation: Trotskyism is not a new movement, a new doctrine, but the restoration, the revival, of genuine Marxism as it was expounded and practiced in the Russian revolution and in the early days of the Communist International.

Bolshevism itself was also a revival, a restoration, of genuine Marxism after this doctrine had been corrupted by the opportunists of the Second International, who culminated their betrayal of the proletariat by supporting the imperialist governments in the World War of 1914-18. When you study the particular period I am going to speak about in this course—the last thirteen years—or any other period since the time of Marx and Engels, one thing is observable. That is, the uninterrupted continuity of the revolutionary Marxist movement....

We are rooted in the past. Our movement which we call Trotskyism, now crystallized in the Socialist Workers Party, did not spring full-blown from nowhere. It arose directly from the Communist Party of the United States. The Communist Party itself grew out of the preceding movement, the Socialist Party, and, in part, the Industrial Workers of the World. It grew out of the movement of the revolutionary workers in America in the pre-war and wartime period.

The Communist Party, which took organizational form in 1919, was originally the Left Wing of the Socialist Party. It was from the Socialist Party that the great body of Communist troops came. As a matter of fact, the formal launching of the Party in September 1919 was simply the organizational culmination of a protracted struggle inside the Socialist Party. There the program had been worked out and there, within the Socialist Party, the original cadres were shaped. This internal struggle eventually led to a split and the formation of a separate organization, the Communist Party....

The Socialist Party Left Wing, which later became the Communist Party, was directly inspired by the Bolshevik revolution of 1917. Prior to that time American militants had very little opportunity to acquire a genuine Marxist education. The leaders of the Socialist Party were not Marxists. The literature of Marxism printed in this country was quite meager and confined almost solely to the economic side of the doctrine. The Socialist Party was a heterogeneous body; its political activity, its agitation and propagandistic teachings were a terrible hodgepodge of all kinds of radical, revolutionary, and reformist ideas. In those days before the

last war, and even during the war, young militants coming to the party looking for a clear programmatic guide had a hard time finding it. They couldn't get it from the official leadership of the party, which lacked serious knowledge of such things. The prominent heads of the Socialist Party were American counterparts of the opportunist leaders of the Social Democratic parties of Europe, only more ignorant and more contemptuous of theory. Consequently, despite their revolutionary impulses and spirit, the great mass of young militants of the American movement were able to learn little Marxism; and without Marxism it is impossible to have a consistent revolutionary movement.

The Bolshevik revolution in Russia changed everything almost overnight. Here was demonstrated in action the conquest of power by the proletariat. As in every other country, the tremendous impact of this proletarian revolutionary victory shook our movement in America to its very foundation. The inspiration alone of the deed enormously strengthened the revolutionary wing of the party, gave the workers new hope, and aroused new interest in those theoretical problems of revolution which had not received proper recognition before that time.

We soon discovered that the organizers and leaders of the Russian revolution were not merely revolutionists of action. They were genuine Marxists in the field of doctrine. Out of Russia, from Lenin, Trotsky, and the other leaders, we received for the first time serious expositions of the revolutionary politics of Marxism. We learned that they had been engaged in long years of struggle for the restoration of unfalsified Marxism in the international labor movement. Now, thanks to the great authority and prestige of their victory in Russia, they were finally able to get a hearing in all countries. All the genuine militants rallied around them and began studying their writings with an interest and eagerness we had never known before. The doctrine they expounded had a tenfold authority because it had been verified in practice. Furthermore, month by month, year by year, despite all the power that world capitalism mobilized against them, they showed a capacity to develop the great revolution, create the Red Army, hold their own, make gains. Naturally, Bolshevism became the authoritative doctrine among revolutionary circles in all the workers political movements of the world, including our own here....

The bulk of the membership in the early Left Wing of the Socialist Party were foreign-born. At that time, more than twenty years ago, a very large section of the basic proletariat in America were foreign-born. Prior to the war the doors of immigration had been wide open, as it served the needs of American capital to accumulate a great labor reserve. Many of these immigrants came to America with socialist sentiments from their home countries. Under the impact of the Russian revolution the foreign-language socialist movement grew by leaps and bounds. The foreign-born were organized into language federations, practically autonomous bodies affiliated to the Socialist Party. There were as many as eight or nine thousand members in the Russian Federation, five or six thousand among the Poles, three or four thousand Ukrainians, about twelve thousand Finns, etc.—an enormous mass of foreign-born members in the party. The great majority rallied to the slogans of the Russian revolution and after the split from the Socialist Party constituted the bulk of the members of the early Communist Party.



Leon Trotsky addressing the First Congress of the Communist International, in March 1919. The Bolshevik revolution in Russia demonstrated in action the conquest of power by the proletariat led by leaders grounded in Marxist theory, explained Cannon.

The leaders of these Federations aspired to control the new party and did in fact control it. By virtue of these blocs of foreign-language workers whom they represented, they exercised an inordinate influence in the early days of the Communist movement. This was good in some ways because for the greater part they were earnest Commu-

nists and helped inculcate the doctrines of Bolshevism.

But their domination was very bad in other respects. Their minds were not really in the United States but in Russia. They gave the movement a sort of unnatural formation and afflicted it at the start with an exotic sectarianism.

—25 AND 50 YEARS AGO—



June 25, 1976

NEW ORLEANS—A major fight is shaping up here between big business and the labor movement as the rulers of Louisiana are trying to ram a "right to work" law through the state legislature.

On one side is the Louisiana Association of Business and Industry (LABI). LABI is running a well organized, highly financed campaign. It includes dozens of time slots on the major radio and TV stations throughout Louisiana as well as large ads in all of the state dailies.

On the other side is the trade union movement. On June 6, in Baton Rouge, the state capital, more than 10,000 workers turned out for a statewide AFL-CIO protest against the proposed law.

Victor Bussie, state AFL-CIO president, declared at the demonstration, "This law would lower your wages, bust up and weaken the unions, and make working conditions worse. If they win, they won't stop here. We have got to let the legislature know we don't want this law at all."

Louisiana is the only state in the South that does not have a so-called right to work law on the books.

These laws make the union shop illegal—thereby allowing workplaces that have union shops to hire nonunion workers.

The bosses claim union shops "violate the democratic rights of workers" and that workers will be better off without them.

On a nationwide basis the attack on the union shop is being organized by the National Right to Work Committee, founded in 1955 by former U.S. Rep. Fred Hartley. Hartley was cosponsor of the notorious anti-labor Taft-Hartley Act.



June 25, 1951

NEW YORK, June 20—Twenty-one leaders of the Communist Party were indicted here today by a Federal Grand Jury in a Justice Department move that signals the expansion of the witchhunt on a broad scale as a result of the Supreme Court decision upholding the constitutionality of the notorious Smith Gag Act. Seventeen early morning arrests were made in typically secret police style, while the remaining four are being sought.

The arrested 17 were arraigned on the strength of a fantastic indictment, which, by a brazen vagueness, indicates the contempt felt by the government for any serious process of law, and a feeling of arrogant confidence that under prevailing conditions any "anti-Communist" indictments, no matter how slipshod or foolish, will be upheld in the courts.

In all, 29 "overt acts" are charged in the indictment. Fully 15 of these simply allege that the defendant "did issue a directive and cause it to be circulated," adding in some cases "through *Political Affairs*" (Stalinist party magazine).

Six other listed "overt acts" allege participation in a "meeting" or a class, in most cases without indicating the location, purpose, composition, or nature of the alleged meeting. In one case, the charge is that the defendant participated in a meeting of the International Workers Order, a fraternal and insurance organization.

In two cases, charges are apparently based solely on the appearance or activities of a defendant at 35 E. 12th St., the CP national headquarters building, which also contains a public bookstore.

Trial targets workers' rights

The June 8 conviction of five men in Miami on federal charges of "spying" for the government of Cuba is a travesty of justice and a blow to the democratic rights of all working people. The conviction of one of the five, Gerardo Hernández, on the unprecedented charge of "conspiracy to commit murder" is not just a frame-up, but a crude attempt to rewrite history and cover up Washington's policy of aggression against the Cuban Revolution. Hernández and two others could get life in prison, and the other two men face up to 10 years in jail.

The government's prosecution and convictions serve to remind workers and farmers that Washington's assaults on the Cuban Revolution—and other struggles of working people around the world—go hand in hand with its efforts to undermine workers' rights.

The trial and the media show around it aimed to demonize revolutionary Cuba and to create an atmosphere in which those who support the revolution or stand up to government and company assaults are at best intimidated and at worst branded as spies and subject to extended incarceration.

The list of undemocratic aspects of the trial is long. The five defendants were convicted in the absence of any evidence that they had stolen "military secrets." They were convicted on the basis of information allegedly contained in supposedly encoded messages the FBI copied off the men's personal computer hard drives in repeated break-ins into their homes, and by the testimony of several of the original defendants who, in the face of stiff prison

terms, cooperated with the frame-up in return for reduced sentences.

Now U.S. officials are threatening further "investigation" of supposed spies for Cuba in the United States. This is an escalation of their efforts to frighten and intimidate anyone who questions or opposes Washington's policies toward Cuba. It is of a piece with Washington's initiatives to beat the drums against supposed terrorists carrying out "industrial espionage" or alleged spying for "rogue" states—that is, all countries that don't cooperate with imperialist wishes—as pretexts for encroaching on democratic rights.

The bosses and their government need to carry out these antidemocratic measures at a time when resistance to their attacks on the labor movement, on welfare and Social Security, and on the dignity of working people is on the increase.

They need to step up attacks on Cuba because the Cuban Revolution, 90 miles from U.S. shores, has survived all of Washington's efforts to isolate and defeat it. The Cuban Revolution continues to be a shining example for workers around the world, and living proof of the revolutionary capacities of workers and farmers.

The spy trial convictions are a violation of workers' rights and a slander against the Cuban Revolution that deal a blow to the working-class movement in every country. All working people have an interest in demanding justice for the five convicted men in Miami and a halt to Washington's witch-hunt against "Cuban spies."

'Fighting for freedom' in W. Sahara

Continued from front page

ganization launched an armed struggle against Spain. Three years later, the governments of Spain, Mauritania, and Morocco signed the Madrid Accords dividing Western Sahara between Mauritania and Morocco. Spain continued to dominate the country economically and politically.

Western Sahara has more than 1,000 kilometers of coastline on the Atlantic Ocean and is rich in phosphate. The Madrid Accords guaranteed Spain a 35 percent stake in the main phosphate mine in Bu Craa. Since then, France, Spain, and the United States have poured several billion dollars into Morocco and Mauritania to help prop up those regimes and to aid them in their suppression of the Sahrawi struggle.

By 1978, the war with Polisario absorbed one-third of the Mauritanian government's annual budget. A year later, with an economy devastated by the increasingly unpopular war, Mauritania renounced all claims to Western Sahara and pulled out. Morocco, which already controlled two-thirds of the country, moved in to occupy the rest.

As a result of a brutal campaign of repression by Morocco, backed by its imperial masters in Madrid, Washington, and Paris, the majority of Sahrawis were driven from their homes into the Algerian desert. Today, close to 200,000 Sahrawis live in camps in the middle of the inhospitable desert in tents and makeshift homes of sandstone, tarps, and corrugated aluminum. Tens of thousands more live under Moroccan occupation, and others live in liberated zones in the western part of the country held by Polisario.

Protests spread in Algeria

BY MAGGIE TROWE

Protests against government repression and for jobs and better housing spread in Algeria last week. Groups of mainly young protesters fought with police in Kenchela, 250 miles east of Algiers, for several days beginning June 10, and clashes with gendarmes also took place to the south of Algiers in the town of Bouira, which has a largely Arab population.

Arabs constitute the majority of the Algerian people. The people of the Kenchela area are Berbers, an oppressed nationality that makes up about 30 percent of the population. Like the Kabyles, the largest Berber grouping, they speak a dialect of the Berber language Tamazight, but are of the Shawia ethnic group.

Daily protests and several large demonstrations have taken place in Kabylia since April 18, when an 18-year-old high school student was killed in police custody. More than 80 people have been killed.

In Khenchela residents reported that police threw tear-gas bombs into apartments and made insulting remarks to people watching from their windows before attacking people in the street. One woman was shot to death, and 90 people were injured.

On June 12 the government of President Abdelaziz Bouteflika sent two government ministers to meet with local representatives, who demanded that young people who had been arrested be released.

A coordinating body of local leaderships in Kabylia has called for a protest in Algiers June 14. Berber leaders told the Associated Press, "We don't need anyone's permission, we have nothing to negotiate. On Thursday, we will march en masse in Algiers." A march of hundreds of thousands took place May 21 in Tizi Ouzou, and another in Algiers May 31.

Zorgan Larousi, 36, a volunteer translator in the camps, spoke to this reporter about their anticolonial struggle. "The people are unanimous in our demand for full independence from Morocco," he said. "The Day of the Martyrs celebrations here in the camps are a reflection of that." This Sahrawi national holiday commemorates the June 9, 1976, attack by Polisario against the capital of Mauritania. Many revolutionaries were killed in that attack, including the central leader of the struggle, El-Ouali, who was still in his early 20s. On the Day of the Martyrs, the camp occupants come together to hear speeches, and to sing, dance, and participate in other cultural events.

In 1989, Polisario and the Moroccan government signed a cease-fire. Shortly after, they agreed to hold a United Nations-organized referendum in which Sahrawis in the occupied part of Western Sahara, the liberated territory, and in the refugee camps were to vote for independence or integration with Morocco.

"Soon after the referendum agreement, the Moroccan government put up many obstacles to avoid a vote because they knew what the outcome would be," said Larousi. "Everyone is getting fed up and demanding action toward a vote or a return to the war. We are reaching the boiling point."

Everyone this reporter spoke to made similar remarks. Twenty-five-year-old Metu Moustafa is part of the generations born and raised in the camps. "We hate war, but it is far better to fight with arms than continuing to live indefinitely in camps in the middle of the desert while our land continues to be occupied by a foreign power," he said. The Moroccan government "thinks if they just wait long enough we will give up or go away, but all they have done is to further unite us. The conditions may be very difficult here, but it is better to be free in the middle of sandstorms than to live under foreign occupation." Moustafa is a member of an organization of Sahrawis whose family members were "disappeared" during the guerrilla war with Morocco.

More than 1,000 Sahrawis have suffered such a fate, including Moustafa's father. The Moroccan government has refused to divulge any information about their status.

Many people also voiced frustration with the role of the UN. "While we are disappointed that the referendum agreement was never implemented, we are not only facing the king of Morocco. We are also facing all the powers behind him, especially the United States," explained Larousi.

Washington has increasingly replaced Madrid as the imperialist power that dominates Morocco, and is the foremost government supplying arms to the regime.

What was most striking for this reporter during a brief stay in the Smara and Dakhla refugee camps was the determination to continue fighting for independence. In spite of the harsh conditions in the desert, where the only natural resource is well water and where the people receive their means of subsistence largely through contributions from international aid organizations, the Sahrawis have made many advances giving them more confidence and strength to continue their struggle for liberation. Those advances have included a literacy campaign, the integration of women into the workforce and the administration of the government, and the expansion of free medical care. Many nurses and doctors have received their university education in Cuba, which offers thousands of students, mainly from colonial and semicolonial countries, the opportunity to study medicine free of charge. Others have studied in Algeria and other countries.

Meat packers link up with resistance

Continued from Page 7
the demonstration.

The discussion at the fraction meeting revealed many ways in which workers from Mexico and other countries are helping to lead workers' struggles today, from initiatives to take back May Day as a workers' holiday, to the large protests in California and other states for the right of immigrants to obtain a drivers license.

"The requirement that your drivers license has your unique Social Security number with a digitized photo ID, your current address, and other information is the rulers' way of introducing a national identity card through the back door, using prejudice and discrimination against immigrants," Benson said in his report.

San Francisco Bay Area meat packer Deborah Liatos said, "Since April there have been weekly actions around immigrant rights. Our coworkers have been discussing this because the lack of drivers licenses has a huge impact on them. Many who participate in these protests are workers, and some carry signs that read, 'We create the wealth, we demand our rights.'"

"In the Twin Cities, where leaders of the fight for the union at Dakota Premium Foods were among the organizers of a May 6 action of 1,000 around this issue, we were slow to see this protest as part of the broad working-class resistance," Tom Fiske said. As a result socialists did not take part in that meeting. They have since drawn the lessons of that default, and have thrown themselves into this ongoing struggle.

On the evening of June 2, UFCW fraction meeting participants joined others from the Des Moines area in attending a Militant Labor Forum entitled "Cuba and the Coming American Revolution," featuring presentations by Joel Britton, a packinghouse worker from Chicago and longtime SWP leader, and Randy Jasper, a Wisconsin dairy and grain farmer (see article on page 11).

The two had recently participated in events in Cuba celebrating the 40th anniversary of the founding of National Association of Small Farmers (ANAP), and in an international conference on organic agriculture that took place in Havana. They urged the audience to help publicize ANAP's call to build a World Forum on Food Sovereignty to take place in Havana September 4-7. They explained that an increasing number of workers and small farmers squeezed by falling commodity prices and rising costs in the United States realize that something fundamental is wrong with the system.

"Anyone who participates in this conference of Cuban farmers will have a chance to consider the revolutionary road that the Cuban people took as a realistic option for the working people in this country," stated Britton.

Rachele Fruit is a member of UFCW Local 1625 in Tampa, Florida. Argiris Malapanis is a meat packer in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida.

Sinn Fein advances in local and UK elections

BY PATRICK O'NEILL

"People have endorsed our vision of tomorrow—an Ireland free from the shackles of the union with Britain," said Gerry Adams, president of Sinn Fein, as reports rolled in of the party's strong showing in voting in Northern Ireland in the June 6 British national election. The party increased to four the number of its Members of Parliament (MPs) and boosted its share of the total vote by more than 5 percent.

The election was marked by an increase in polarization, with Sinn Fein and the right-wing pro-British Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) both scoring gains. Local elections held over the following week confirmed the trend.

Adams described the party's June 6 results as a "resounding vote for an end to partition," referring to the forcible division of Ireland by British imperialism. In the words of its election manifesto, Sinn Fein campaigned for "a united Ireland which delivers real social and economic change." The party's candidates defended the Good Friday agreement, a 1998 accord under which London granted a measure of self government in Northern Ireland, along with other concessions.

For the first time, Sinn Fein gained more seats and votes than the Social Democratic Labor Party (SDLP). The Sinn Fein MPs will not take their seats in Westminster.

The Ulster Unionist Party (UUP) led by David Trimble lost ground in the election. It is the largest party in Northern Ireland and is treated by London as its key ally among the increasingly divided parties supporting British rule. It was a signatory to the Good Friday agreement.

The Democratic Unionist Party of the rightist Ian Paisley attacked the accord, and increased its vote by almost 9 percent, winning five seats—up from two in 1997.

Trimble's own party is deeply divided on the agreement. After losing three seats, including one to Sinn Fein, the UUP "finished with six MPs evenly split between pro- and anti-agreement MPs," reported the *Financial Times*.

Local races for city council seats in the six counties were also held. Along with the DUP, Sinn Fein was a "big victor in the elections," reported the *Irish Times*. "A total of 108 republican [city] councillors were returned, including 14 in Belfast where Sinn Fein is now the largest single party, and set to have a member elected as Lord mayor for the first time."

ANC leaders discuss 'black empowerment' in South Africa

BY T.J. FIGUEROA

PRETORIA, South Africa—The difficulties facing a layer of blacks in South Africa who are seeking to become part of the capitalist ruling class were registered with the release of figures in April showing a sharp drop in the number of nominally black-controlled companies on the Johannesburg stock exchange. Such companies, which held about 10 percent of shares on the exchange in 1998, now exercise influence over only 4.8 percent. "Black-owned" entities on the bourse peaked at 43, but now number only 26.

This trend has alarmed the small layer of wealthy blacks in South Africa. It brought forth a proposal from the Black Economic Empowerment Commission, chaired by Cyril Ramaphosa—the most prominent spokesperson for this layer—for government legislation to boost "black empowerment." There is already legislation on the books, in the early stages of implementation, demanding employer compliance with affirmative action in hiring and training for Blacks and women, as well as laws to promote small business.

Ramaphosa rose to prominence in working-class mobilizations against white-minority rule and became the general secretary of the National Union of Mineworkers. He was part of the African National Congress delegation in negotiations to form a post-apartheid constitution, and was subsequently elected ANC secretary-general.

But in 1996 he abandoned day-to-day responsibilities in the organization to become the standard-bearer for what is referred to by the capitalist media and government and business officials as "black empowerment." He first headed New Africa Investments Limited, which was a spectacular failure. Today he is chairman of Johnnic, a media and publishing group whose three companies make up 78 percent of the "empowerment" shares on the exchange. Ramaphosa remains a member of the ANC National Executive Committee.

After the first democratic, nonracial elections in 1994, which marked the end of apartheid, companies such as Anglo American Corp., recognizing a need to politically distance themselves from their central role in organizing and maintaining white-minority rule, sold hunks of their businesses to aspirant black capitalists. However, these deals were funded by massive debts that must still be repaid. As a result, many of the post-1994 "empowerment" businesses are in trouble.

Mbeki supports 'black capitalist class'

The perspective of enrichment of a layer of blacks has the support of South African and ANC president Thabo Mbeki. "As part of the realization of the aim to eradicate racism in our country, we must strive to create and strengthen a black capitalist class," he told a 1999 conference of the Black Management Forum, which initiated the Ramaphosa commission. "This is and must

be an important part of the process of the deracialization of the ownership of productive property in our country."

A large proportion of those in the front ranks of "empowerment" are members and former leaders of the ANC. For example, the former commander of the ANC's armed wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK), Joe Modise, who subsequently served as defense minister, is now the director of companies that have won or are seeking government military contracts. A report in the *Financial Mail* magazine estimates that former MK leaders have won about four billion rands (about \$500 million) worth of military subcontracts.

Former posts and telecommunications minister Jay Naidoo, who was also previously a top official of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), quit his post to form an information technology company. Mac Maharaj, a prominent leader of the ANC, departed his post as transport minister to become a director of FirstRand bank.

Devastation of workers, farmers

South Africa is the biggest economic power south of the Sahara, a result of the brutal superexploitation of black workers, who were stripped of their land and cattle in increasing numbers from the time the European colonizers first landed in 1652, and then denied all rights under the whip of the apartheid rulers.

The modern economy was built on the mineral wealth controlled by the mining houses, particularly gold and diamonds, from the last quarter of the 19th century. The economy remains highly monopolized, with a handful of companies such as Anglo American lording over a huge spread of factories and farms, and a few banks dominating finance.

South Africa's economy is being severely squeezed by the economic downturn in North America. "SA's economy sputtered along at a surprisingly slow pace in the first quarter, casting a pall over hopes that the country would notch up a respectable growth rate of 3.5 percent this year. SA needs to grow at a rate of at least about 6 percent a year to make inroads into its huge unemployment problem," said a report in the May 29 *Business Day*, published in Johannesburg.

Manufacturing growth came in at only 1.1 percent in the first quarter. Exports fell 15 percent in April. The currency, the rand, is worth about half what it was in dollar terms in 1995. Reflecting worldwide trends, the stock market here is sharply down from two years ago.

The Ramaphosa commission report was presented to Mbeki in May. It raises proposals mainly aimed at how the state should direct assets and finances to help turn around the stagnation of capital accumulation by a layer of blacks. For example, the authors of the report advocate measures to bring black share ownership on the stock exchange to 25 percent within 10 years.

Pepsi workers in New Jersey reject new contract with additional givebacks



Militant Nancy Rosenstock

Picket line in front of Pepsi Bottling Co. plant in Piscataway, New Jersey, June 1, where 700 union members of Teamsters Local 125 rejected company contract. The strike includes other plants throughout New Jersey. John Fifick, shop steward, explained that the new contract includes "a flex workweek" that "will enable them to pay us straight time for Saturday and Sunday." The union wants a 4 percent wage increase while the company's offer stands at 1 percent.

While weighted in this direction, the commission says a Black Empowerment Act is also needed to improve conditions for workers and peasants. Such an act would require companies bidding for government contracts to submit reports detailing things such as procurement to black suppliers and black ownership. It calls for an end to the widespread discrimination in lending and for the establishment of a national database of black suppliers.

"The economy today is owned largely by white people," Ramaphosa told the Johannesburg *Sunday Independent* earlier this year. "It's managed by white people, it's controlled by white people, and even the way the market operates is more orientated to satisfying the needs of the minority."

Class struggle in countryside

The commission's report supports the government's ongoing program of privatizing state-owned industries, a move that has been resisted by the unions. It encourages expanding loans for farm and other enterprises in rural areas, as well as funds to improve roads and other infrastructure in the countryside.

Under apartheid, blacks were not allowed to farm and millions were banished to impoverished rural "homelands" that were used as labor reserves by mining and other capitalists. More than 75 percent of agricultural land is still owned by whites, much of it contained in huge capitalist farm enterprises. This blocks the formation of a modern class structure and prevents millions of peasants and farm workers from drawing wealth from the land and producing cash crops.

Because racism, and the economic setup established under apartheid, remains part of the day-to-day experience of most blacks in South Africa, the commission's proposals are likely to gain a hearing among large numbers of workers and peasants who face

desperate conditions, in addition to the growing middle-class.

The commission's report comes amidst a vacuum of other proposals before the government to address these questions, barring those of the mostly white capitalist opposition parties. The "free-market" proposals of the latter fail to mask their hostility to affirmative action.

To date, the ANC government has emphasized building a more efficient and productive economy through fiscal conservatism, privatization of state assets, and relaxing labor laws to the benefit of the employers.

The proposal for legislation has not been welcomed in ruling-class circles. The South African Chamber of Business rejected it, saying, "Artificial means to achieve BEE [black economic empowerment] could be detrimental for the economy that desperately needs higher levels of growth that will be sustainable.... The government's macroeconomic strategy (Growth, Employment and Redistribution) if applied in its entirety is more appropriate to secure the economic growth envisaged."

Meanwhile, the union federation COSATU estimates that 1 million jobs have been eliminated over the past decade, and one in three workers is out of a job. Official unemployment is put at between 22 percent and 27 percent, figures that do not include those who have given up looking for work. If they are included, unemployment is about 35 percent. In May, the Unemployment Insurance Fund, which provides minimal support to workers laid off in the "formal" sector, was declared technically bankrupt.

"We are still losing jobs at an alarming rate," COSATU said in a May Day statement. "We still have two worlds in a single country, although a few black businessmen and government officials have managed to get visas into the privileged state that the white minority has always enjoyed."

LETTERS

Cuban photographer dies

One of Cuba's greatest photographers, Alberto Diaz Gutiérrez, known as Korda, died of a heart attack May 25 in Paris at age 72.

Before the Cuban Revolution triumphed in 1959, Korda was a well-known fashion photographer. Like thousands of others, he was in the streets of Havana to welcome the Rebel Army when it marched into the city. His photograph of Fidel Castro together with revolutionary leader Camilo Cienfuegos appeared in the newspaper *Revolución*. Shortly thereafter Korda was asked to become Fidel's photographer and in that capacity traveled with the revolutionary leader throughout Cuba and around the world. Many of his images are among the best known from the early period of the Cuban Revolution.

In December 1998, Korda visited Seattle at the invitation of local photographers who had met him in Cuba. An overflow crowd of more than 300 people heard him speak at Seattle University and scores of others welcomed him at a reception at Seattle's Northwest Photographic Center, where a selection of his work was being shown.

One of Korda's most well-known images was a picture of Cuban revolutionary leader Che Guevara that came to be known as the "Heroic Guerrilla." At the request of a leader of the revolution Korda gave this photo to an Italian visitor to Cuba in the 1960s. Subsequently it became one of the most widely reproduced photographs anywhere in the world.

A Reuters obituary noted that Korda never received royalties for

the photo. "Korda never objected to mass use of his photo as a protest symbol," the obituary explained, "but in recent years he began to fight its commercial reproduction in ways he said 'dishonored' his subject."

Lisa Ahlberg
Seattle, Washington

Teamsters walk out

Teamsters Local 877 carried out a "walkout on Wednesday" at lunch time and an afternoon rally June 6. This was the kick off of a corporate campaign at the Tosco/Phillips refinery in Bayway, New Jersey. At the noontime rally more than 150 maintenance workers and others marched out of the plant and circled the company's headquarters before returning to work.

Some 250 workers gathered in

the afternoon at the main gates to hear speakers next to a giant rat with Tosco's head boss name on it. The rally was chaired by local president Kurt Greder and featured addresses by Bill Kane of the Inter Union Council (an organization of industrial unions), Bernie Lazo representing striking workers at Pepsi Cola, other union officials, and a number of Democratic and Republican party local politicians. Unionists from PACE, hospital workers Local 1199, Communication Workers of America, and United Food and Commercial Workers also attended.

Tosco acquired the Exxon refinery in 1993. The company has imposed cuts in the workforce without regards to seniority, lowered wages and benefits of those remaining, and eroded pensions.

Tosco carried out similar attacks on oil workers at the former British Petroleum refinery in Marcus Hook, Pennsylvania, and at its California refineries.

The rallies were called to prepare for the upcoming negotiations with the major oil companies over the coming year. The aim of the workers is to "get back what was lost" in face of soaring oil company profits.

Robert Robertson
Bloomfield, New Jersey

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.

Scotland march backs Irish struggle

5,000 in Glasgow march to commemorate 1980-81 hunger strikes in Northern Ireland

BY CAROL BALL

GLASGOW, Scotland—In the first major Irish republican march in this city in more than 20 years, 5,000 people took to the streets May 27. The marchers commemorated the 1980-81 hunger strikes, backed the continuing freedom struggle in Northern Ireland, and condemned anti-Irish discrimination in the United Kingdom.

Twenty years ago, Irish freedom fighters imprisoned by the British government organized a hunger strike to demand they be accorded the status of political prisoners. Ten men died from starvation in the course of the strike, which gained international attention for the fight against Britain's occupation of Northern Ireland and the forced division of the country.

Young people joined the march in large numbers. "We're here to support the hunger strikers," said Mark Donegan, 16. "We disagree with British rule in Ireland." "And in Scotland," added his friend Barry McGloan, 17.

"Why isn't Ireland a nation? It has been long enough we've waited," said Tony Bergna, 16. "Also, it's still the case that Catholics in Scotland are discriminated against." Referring to the local Irish football team, Bergna said, "If you're wearing a Celtic top, the police harass you. Of course they do, they're *Her Majesty's* police force." Donegan and Bergna were both avid readers of Irish history and were amongst the first to arrive at the demonstration.

Speaking at the post-march rally, Raymond McCartney, a former political prisoner who took part in the first H-Block hunger strike in 1980, said, "This turnout is astounding. It gives you an idea of the public support there is for the republican struggle. The commemoration of the hunger strikes is not about looking back, but onwards. The struggle continues. My memories of 1981 can be summed up by two images: one, a picture of four women in Derry, standing alone and ridiculed, naked in a blanket in front of the cathedral to highlight conditions in Armagh womens' prison. And the other, a picture of more than 100,000 people marching at [hunger striker] Bobby Sands's funeral a few months later."

Sands, a 27-year-old working-class youth, was a leader of the hunger strike at the time he was elected to British parliament. He died on May 5, 1981, in an H-Block hospital after 65 days without food.

"The hunger strikers were ordinary fellows who lived in working-class areas," McCartney said. "They were faced with extraordinary circumstances. The British government tried to criminalize their struggle and they proved it wrong. But they are not icons in the sky. In extraordinary circumstances, we can all do a little bit extra."

The turnout at the march here "was always going to be large," Jim Slaven, of the



Supporters of Irish freedom struggle march in first major Irish republican demonstration through downtown Glasgow in more than 20 years. "We disagree with British rule in Ireland and in Scotland," said two young marchers.

1981 Hunger Strike Committee, told the *Herald*, "because the hunger strike is of immense importance to people in the Irish community in Scotland. But the crowd was far bigger than even we anticipated."

The last Irish republican march to go through Glasgow city center in 1979 in support of the fight for political status for republican prisoners was attacked by bands of Loyalists, the name for those in Northern Ireland who are "loyal" to the union of Ireland with Britain. Police refused to allow marchers to proceed into the city center.

This time police had to hold back small knots of rightists, some making nazi-style salutes. One broke through, attacking a lead marcher with a bottle. He was prevented from further attacks by march stewards. The marchers, confident and spirited, responded to the rightists, chanting "Brits don't rule!" and "Brits out now!" Frustrated at their impotence this time, rightists attacked shoppers wearing Celtic shirts in the city center as the march went on. Steven Bradley told a newspaper that he "remembered them chanting Loyalist slogans and singing 'Rule Britannia' as they hit me."

"Whatever the police and politicians who

wanted to ignore republicans said about this march, we finally got to walk through the streets of Glasgow," said Slaven. "This shows that when we work together and put our minds to it, we can do anything we want to in this country."

"We are getting stronger," said longtime Glasgow resident Jimmy McGee, a marcher originally from County Donegal in Ireland, who had also joined the 1979 action.

Irish face discrimination

"The Celtic football club was founded by Irish immigrants to Glasgow in the 19th century," explained Eoin Hayes, a republican activist who had traveled from London. "It was a response to the 'No Irish need apply' attitude they found. That's why support for the club is intertwined with Irish nationalist politics in Glasgow. There's definitely still discrimination against Catholics here. For example, the statistics show Catholic unemployment is higher," he said.

In a study last year, researchers at Glasgow University found that men with Irish surnames were 26 percent more likely to die prematurely than other males in West Central Scotland. The study concluded,

Workers in Wales locked out after ending strike

PAUL DAVIES
AND PAUL GALLOWAY

LONDON—More than 100 members of the Transport and General Workers' Union (TGWU) set up 24-hour picket lines when the bosses at Dynamex Friction Dynamics in Caernarfon, north Wales, locked the workers out of the plant. Picket signs in English and Welsh read, "If we tolerate this who will be next?" and "*Diolch am einch cefnogaeth*" (We welcome your support).

The bosses imposed the lockout, now in its fifth week, when the workers returned to the plant following a week-long strike. The

unionists had voted to walk off the job by 93 percent.

At the center of the company's demands is a proposal to turn all negotiations with the union over wages and working conditions to a "works council" made up of employees picked by the bosses. In previous months the owner, Craig Smith, had announced 24 redundancies (layoffs), the end of a system of payment of union dues through the company payroll, known as "check-off," and had refused to negotiate with the current union leaders.

Support for the workers has come from

"Discrimination in the workplace plays a significant role in the current disadvantage of those of Irish origin."

The march was not reported in media based in England. Most of the coverage in Scottish newspapers highlighted the few violent incidents and branded the demonstration an "IRA march." Responding to the suggestion that the march might be held every year, Glasgow Conservative Party member of the Scottish Parliament William Aitken responded, "It's simply not on. If they want it to be an annual event why don't they stay in Northern Ireland and hold it there? The people of Glasgow want no truck with this sort of thing."

Supporters of the Irish freedom struggle organized an earlier event in London April 28, which was attended by 200 people. Jim McVeigh, the last commanding officer of republican prisoners at Long Kesh prison, explained the hunger strike commemorations "are about educating and bringing a new generation into the struggle."

In 1981, republicans were suspicious about political activity and were very militarist. This was a legacy of the betrayals of previous generations. We had to develop politically as well as militarily. The 1981 hunger strike accelerated that development," he said.

"Bobby Sands's election destroyed one of the major planks of British rule: its strategy of criminalization. Across the world [British Prime Minister] Margaret Thatcher tried to say we were criminals, but people like Bobby Sands proved her wrong," McVeigh said. While the hunger strikes ended "without apparent victory, within a year the prisoners had achieved the substance of their demands."

Questioned about the current stage of the struggle, McVeigh said, "Our objectives have not changed. All that has changed is our tactics. The struggle is far from over and there's a long road ahead. The whole question of the cease-fire [by the IRA] is a tactical question. We'll do whatever it takes to advance the struggle. We need to build our political strength. At the moment the republican movement is a minority of the people. We have to develop a strategy that can build and broaden our base. We have to constantly take the initiative and fight the propaganda war in Ireland, Britain, and America."

Carol Ball is a member of the Transport and General Workers' Union.

Nurses strike hospitals in Minneapolis area

BY KAREN RAY

MINNEAPOLIS—"These Boots Were Made for Walking" was playing in the background on the first day of a strike by 1,350 registered nurses of the Fairview Hospital system here June 3. Nurses say the strike is over the hospital administration's refusal to adequately address issues of patient care and staffing levels, as well as health insurance premiums and wages.

Contracts covering registered nurses organized by the Minnesota Nurses Association expired June 1 at 12 area hospitals. The deadline was extended through June 3 for last-minute negotiations and voting. Hospi-

tal management organized to bring in 4,000 strikebreakers to replace the 7,800 nurses affected by the contracts, including 400 brought into Fairview as nurses walked off the job and set up the picket line. Contracts were approved at hospitals other than those in the Fairview system.

Picket signs reading, "I believe nurses, safe care now," "Nurses stand for patients," "Short staffed nurses means short changed patients," and "Replacement nurses are union busting, clear and simple!"

One of the biggest questions facing the nurses is the number of patients they are responsible for and the number of hours they

are forced to work. Cheryl Johnson, president of United American Nurses who works in a hospital in Michigan, told a May 31 rally of 500 here that in the 29 years as a nurse she "has never worked like this before and there is no reason for it. There is plenty of money out there for nursing staff. We, as nurses, want to let the public know that there is a health-care crisis."

Sue Buesgens, a nurse and chair of the Fairview negotiating committee, said hospital management proposed a contract that would have nurses paying up to \$300 a month for health insurance if they have dependents.

local residents, including one farmer. Strikers have organized a town center collection to raise strike funds and have been successful in turning back a majority of lorries delivering supplies to the plant. A leader of the Welsh Assembly, Labour Party member Rhodri Morgan, has visited the picket line to express support.

The company has hired a handful of scabs who have been forced to accept a 15 percent wage cut since starting work. The same pay cut has been imposed on about 15 skilled workers who are members of the Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Union (AEEU) who are not locked out. Currently the company is demanding that members of the AEEU perform some of the work done previously by locked-out members of the TGWU.

TGWU branch secretary Barry Williams, one of those earmarked for redundancy, commented, "Smith says that he is willing to talk to the union, but what he is not prepared to do is sit down and negotiate. All of us are adamant that we will stay out as long as it takes. We are determined to win."

The outcome of the strike will have an impact on workers and bosses across the region, which has an unemployment rate that is double the average in Britain.

Donations and messages of support can be sent to Tom Jones, Regional organizer TGWU, 17 Sergontium House, Caernarfon, north Wales.