

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Speech by Raúl Castro on
Cuba's role in Africa

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Post-9/11, Bush builds case for new war moves

With earlier momentum exhausted, U.S. rulers shift course

BY JACK WILLEY

With the momentum of September 11 exhausted for the U.S. imperialist rulers, the Bush administration has begun building a case for a new round of military aggression in the world.

The U.S. president took his campaign against north Korea, Iran, and Iraq as the "axis of evil" in the world on the road last week, with a tour of Asia. The administration, searching for a way to justify a renewed course toward war, is trying to raise a scare around the ability, or potential ability, of those countries to build and deploy weapons of mass destruction.

In Japan, Bush said at a press conference that "there are some nations in the world which want to develop weapons that will hurt the United States and/or our friends and allies, and we've got to stop them from doing so." Another purpose of the U.S. president's trip was to pressure the Japanese rulers to carry out major economic reforms to try to head off a collapse of the country's banking system.

"Make no mistake about it," said Bush, "we will defend our interests and I will defend the American people." He later said Washington is "more committed than ever to a forward presence in this region," speaking of the massive U.S. military forces armed with nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction that are stationed in Japan, south Korea, and on warships in the Pacific. "We will continue to show American power and purpose in support of the Philippines, Australia, and Thailand," and "will press on with an effective program of missile defenses," he said.

Bush also aimed his fire at remarks by several leaders of imperialist governments in Europe who have questioned Wash-

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March of 1,000 backs striking nurses in New York



Nurses lead march in New York, February 16, to protest mandatory overtime.

BY SUSAN ARMSTRONG

SMITHTOWN, New York—Striking nurses here mobilized 1,000 people in a spirited march and rally February 16, their 83rd day on the picket lines. Nurses

from all over the New York area took part, as well as a broad array of union locals.

The walkout by the 475 nurses is directed at St. Catherine's of Siena Medi-

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Capitalists in Venezuela step up drive to topple government

BY JACK WILLEY
AND RÓGER CALERO

The capitalist class in Venezuela is preparing to attempt to overthrow the government of Hugo Chávez and deal blows to the working class and the peasantry in the process. This drive is setting the stage for a possible civil war in the South American country.

The employers' offensive takes place in the midst of a deepening economic crisis aggravated by a drop in oil prices, a world recession that has hit semicolonial countries particularly hard, especially in Latin America, and a massive flight of capital that has shaken the confidence of the capitalist rulers.

On February 18, in open defiance of the Chávez government, Vice Admiral Carlos Molina, the country's ambassador-designate to Greece, called on the "armed forces and the people to publicly show their opposition to Chávez's unpatriotic stand," and for the Venezuelan president to step down. Molina is the fourth high-ranking officer in two weeks to publicly call for Chávez's resignation.

Echoing the condemnation of Chávez's "authoritarian" style of government, the military officers are attempting to discredit him and present themselves as true defenders of Venezuela's "democratic system" and

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Havana book fair celebrates two titles on struggle for women's liberation

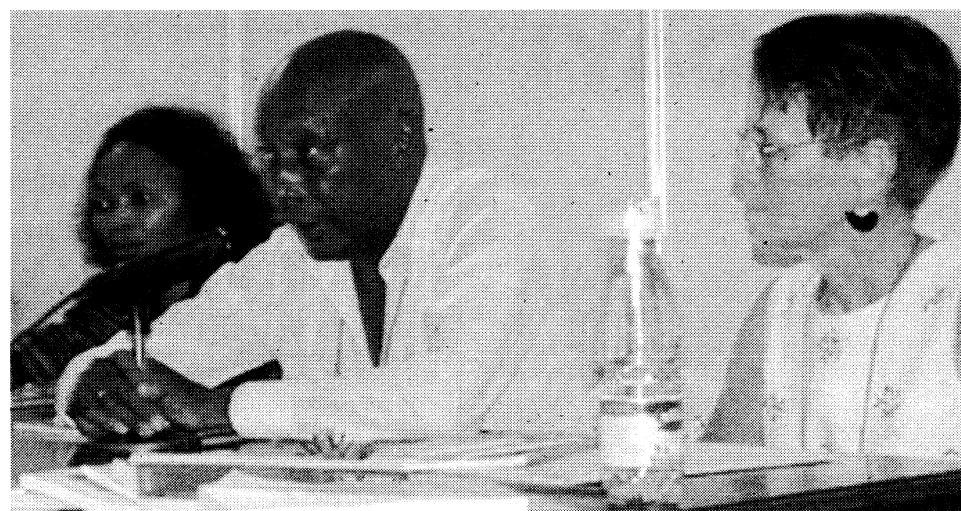
BY BRIAN TAYLOR
AND YONATAN MOSQUERA

HAVANA—A meeting to celebrate the publication of two Spanish-language books on the struggle for the liberation of women in Africa was one of the features of the 11th Havana International Book Fair, held here February 7-17.

Equality and the Social Participation of Mozambican Women, published by Tricontinental Editions, was presented by author Vitoria Afonso Langa de Jesús. Mary-Alice Waters, president of Pathfinder Press, introduced *Women's Liberation and the Af-*

rican Freedom Struggle, a March 1987 speech by Thomas Sankara, leader of the 1983-87 revolutionary government in the West African country of Burkina Faso. Ulises Estrada, director of Tricontinental Editions,

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From left to right, author Vitoria Afonso; Ulises Estrada, director of Tricontinental Editions; and Mary-Alice Waters, president of Pathfinder Press speak at Cuba event.

'Defense of workers' rights is crucial,' says fired socialist

BY STEVEN WARSHALL

HOUSTON—As part of a nationwide tour in his fight to be reinstated at his job as a sewing machine operator at Goodwill Industries in Miami, socialist worker Michael Italie spoke to a meeting of 40 people here February 9. Goodwill CEO Dennis Pastrana says the nonprofit company fired Italie last

Socialist garment worker Michael Italie fights political firing in Miami

October for political views he expressed at a televised candidates forum. Italie ran for mayor of Miami on the Socialist Workers Party ticket and was on the ballot in the November elections.

Italie is encouraging his supporters to focus their efforts on informing co-workers about the case and winning their backing for the fight. "We want to sign up thousands of workers for this fight. Defending workers rights against employer and government assault is crucial for the labor movement and all working people. It is the only way to defend our ability to organize, discuss, de-

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Bush builds case for new war moves

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ington's new campaign. He told them not to fear "a state of war tomorrow," and in the same breath, added, "Let's not swoon." At the same event Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi endorsed the "axis of evil" campaign, even though Japan has formal relations with Iran.

Vice President Dick Cheney voiced with particular clarity and arrogance the strength of U.S. imperialism vis-a-vis its rivals across the Atlantic. During a February 15 luncheon of the Council of Foreign Affairs he said, "America has friends and allies in this case, but only we can lead it. Only we can rally the world in a task of this complexity against an enemy so elusive and so resourceful. The United States and only the United States can see this effort through to victory."

Four days later, Cheney appeared at the Richard Nixon Presidential Library and on the Jay Leno show as part of a tour through California. "A few of our friends in Europe are hesitant to join in condemning what the president has called the 'axis of evil' states and terrorist allies arming to threaten the peace in the world. But evidence is compelling," he said. He had earlier made the point that once Washington starts military action somewhere, the "friends" will have little choice but to go along.

In one speech Cheney claimed that Saddam Hussein's regime "harbors terrorist groups, including Abu Nidal and the Palestine Liberation Front." He repeated similar claims against Iran, calling the government the "world's leading exporter of terror, directly supporting Hamas, Hezbollah, and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad terrorist groups." He also accused the Iranian regime to being "committed to everything it can do to destroy the process for peace in the Middle East."

'Pound on Iraq'

When France's foreign minister, Hubert Vedrine, called the "axis of evil" threats "simplistic," Secretary of State Colin Powell shot back that Vedrine was "getting the vapors." His remark was later repeated by Bush. Powell said, "My European colleagues should be pounding on Iraq as quickly as they pound on us when the president makes a strong, principled speech."

One of the unspoken differences between Paris and Washington is the debt that the Iraqi government owes to France. Paris also sees the country as a potential source for investment of tremendous exploitable wealth.

After Christopher Patten, the European Union's foreign affairs commissioner, accused Bush of taking an "absolutist" approach to the world, Powell retorted, "I shall have a word with him, as they say in Britain."

The German foreign minister accused Washington of treating "coalition partners" like "satellites," implicitly comparing it to the former Soviet Union and the Eastern Bloc countries.

The governments in the workers states of China and Russia have also raised concern.

While administration officials have matched their arrogant tone with sugar coating by making offers to negotiate with the governments of Iran, Iraq, and north Korea—but under conditions that would violate their sovereignty and dictate what they can use to defend themselves—the administration is seeking to build bipartisan support for an assault on Iraq.

Several big-business commentators have pointed to the 1980 raid by Israeli forces against a nuclear power plant being built by the Iraqi government as an example for Washington.

To bolster the longer-term course of U.S. imperialism in the world, the administration announced it was making permanent an office it set up to provide positive news and information about the United States. The Pentagon is developing plans to provide false news items to foreign media organizations as part of the latest effort to advance U.S. political interests in countries it considers allies and enemies. Although Washington has carried out disruptive actions both inside the United States and abroad for decades, the defense department wants to legitimize its right to carry these measures out in the open.

Japan on verge of banking collapse

Reuters reported that during his meetings with Japanese prime minister Koizumi, Bush called for the Japanese government to "clean up its billions of dollars in bad loans,



U.S. and south Korean troops conduct military exercise on floating bridge in 1997. Washington maintains 37,000 heavily armed soldiers in the south alongside the 650,000-man south Korean army—a sign of its aggressive intentions toward north Korea, whose army helped to deal U.S. forces their first major defeat in the 1950–53 Korean war.

overhaul regulations of the banking sector, and address deflation, the spiral of falling prices and falling wages.

The Japanese economy—facing its fourth recession in a decade—is in the midst of an accelerating deflationary spiral, a contraction that will not be fundamentally reversed by the regular ups and downs of the business cycle. In face of declining profit rates and overcapacity in construction and other industries, capitalists in Japan are forced to drive down the price of their commodities to try to undercut domestic and foreign competition and in order to stay afloat. In an attempt to shore up profits, they are laying off workers, attacking health and safety on the job, and speeding up production.

Japan's official public debt has risen to 130 percent of the gross domestic product, and Koizumi's proposed budget will drive that ratio above 140 percent within a year. The Japanese government expects to accumulate \$5.2 trillion in long-term debt, and banks are already holding billions of dollars in bad loans. Moody's Investors Service warned that it may downgrade the world's second-largest economy's debt rating to "single-A" status, the same rating as Botswana, Chile, Latvia, Poland, and South Africa.

The country's stock market prices and the estimated market value of real estate make up the bulk of Japanese banks' money reserves that are supposed to serve as a buffer against defaults on loans. Land prices, which shot through the roof in the 1980s, have come tumbling down, falling by more than 75 percent by 1999. The Nikkei stock market, which peaked at 40,000 points in 1989, now languishes at around 10,000. Banks have built up more debt from loan defaults than they can cover from their declining reserves. As a result, the potential for a banking collapse and financial meltdown in Japan is growing by the day.

Japan has faced a sharp decline in industrial production and capital investment in building new factories and machinery. The

Economist reports that many companies will never make a profit, but the banks continue to prop them up to avoid bankruptcies, praying that one day they will see some of the money and accompanying interest on billions of dollars in loans. More than 19,000 companies went belly-up last year and corporate giants like Fujitsu, Hitachi, and Toshiba are carrying out massive layoffs as their profits sag.

"As they [banks] continue to cling on, meanwhile, the walking dead drive down prices and capture business from healthier rivals.... The corporate zombies are perpetuating the deflationary spiral," the *Economist* reported.

Unemployment at record levels

Official unemployment now stands at 5.6 percent, the highest since World War II, and workers face ongoing layoffs and wage cuts. Consumer prices have fallen for more than two years, cutting deep into the capitalists' profit rates. Japan has faced declining retail sales for more than three years straight in spite of companies driving down commodity prices. Working people and the middle class have cut back on spending as the fear of an economic free-fall is spreading and the social wage is declining.

The rulers admit they plan to squeeze working people substantially more. The union bureaucracy of Rengo, the main Japanese trade union federation, has said that for the first time since World War II it will accept wage cuts in exchange for promises of some "job security" in negotiations this spring.

Japan's rulers, however, face another great challenge—an aging workforce, dwindling population, and a small percentage of immigrant workers. The bosses have a more difficult time pushing through assembly line speedup, cutting corners on safety, and suppressing wages to increase productivity. Unlike the imperialist countries in Europe and North America, which have encouraged

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THE MILITANT

British troops out of Northern Ireland

Recently 30,000 people marched in Northern Ireland to demand justice for the 14 people gunned down by British paratroopers in 1972. Read the 'Militant' to get a working-class view of the struggle for a united Ireland and the fight to end British military occupation in the six northern counties.



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Lynching exhibit highlights barbarism of capitalist society

Southern trees bear a strange fruit, blood on the leaves and blood at the root. Black bodies swinging in the southern breeze, strange fruit hanging from the poplar trees.

—Billie Holliday

BY OMARI MUSA

PITTSBURGH—This is the first stanza of the song made famous by Billie Holliday. She first sang it in 1939 at the Cafe Society in New York City. This “strange fruit” was the theme of “Without Sanctuary: Lynching Photography in America,” an exhibition of photographs and postcards at the Andy Warhol Museum from September through the Martin Luther King Holiday January 21.

The display is a collection of nearly 100 photographs and postcards from 1870 to 1960 put together by James Allen and John Spencer Littlefield. The museum said that 31,400 people visited the exhibit with more than 1,000 attending the last day. The total attendance was the largest ever for an exhibition at the Warhol museum.

The photos and cards show in gruesome detail the extent of the extralegal violence carried out against Blacks all over the United States during those years. The majority took place in the deep South and southern border states. A large percentage occurred between 1880 and 1920.

During those years thousands of Black men and women were tortured and mutilated, including sharecroppers, farmers, store owners, miners, railroaders, and other laborers. There is no way to know the exact number since disappearances of Blacks were common.

“The quality of the racial violence that gripped the South made it distinctive in this nation’s history,” wrote Leon Litwack, author of the introduction to the book *Without Sanctuary*, which contains all the photos in the exhibit. “In the 1890s,” he continued, “lynchings claimed an average of 139 lives each year, 75 percent of them black.... Between 1882 and 1968, an estimated 4,742 blacks met their deaths at the hands of lynch mobs. As many, if not more, were victims of legal lynching, private white violence, and ‘nigger hunts.’”

Often leaders or potential leaders of the Black community were lynched if for no other reason than to “teach them a lesson.” Several photos show victims who defended themselves and their families from cops and racist mobs. William Brooks, a coal miner, was lynched on July 22, 1901, in Elkins, West Virginia, for killing a cop who tried to arrest him. A mob of 500 carried out this lynching. Another photo shows Laura Nelson and her son hanging from a bridge in Okemah, Oklahoma. Nelson’s son was accused of killing a deputy who claimed they had stolen meat. Forty night riders participated in this lynching.

The exhibit also includes photos of Castengo Ficcarotta and Angelo Albano, Italian immigrant workers lynched after an outbreak of violence between striking workers and strikebreakers at a cigar factory in Tampa, Florida, in 1910. Another depiction

is that of Leo Frank, a Jewish factory supervisor framed up and hung in 1915 on charges of killing a female worker. The significance of this lynching was that it marked the KKK as being not only anti-Black, but anti-Semitic as well. Frank was posthumously pardoned in 1985.

Black land loss and the ‘lynching trail’

Lynchings were a common weapon used by racists to drive Blacks off the land. A study published last December by the Associated Press documented 107 “land takings” in 13 southern states during the years portrayed in the exhibit. Some of the “takings” were against individual Blacks, while others targeted whole Black communities and towns. The AP investigation listed murders, house-burnings, theft, and officially sanctioned mob-ruled intimidation of Black farmers and landowners. “If you are looking for stolen Black land just follow the lynching trail,” explained Raymond Winbush, director of Fisk University’s Race Relations Institute.

This was the case with the 1916 lynching of Anthony Crawford in South Carolina. Crawford was a successful cotton farmer. He was arrested for cursing a white businessman in a dispute over the sale price of his cotton. After being released from jail he was cornered by a mob, knifed, beaten, and lynched. His family fought to keep the land but were eventually foreclosed on by the banks.

Violence meted out against Blacks after emancipation in 1865, including mob executions, was designed to undermine the gains of their new freedom. In the years immediately following the Civil War, the victorious northern capitalists vacillated in carrying out measures to crush the power and authority of the southern planter class. Facing uprisings against its control, the federal government was forced to end all post-Civil War governments and carry through what became Radical Reconstruction in 1867. The South was occupied by federal troops, while ex-slaves waged a struggle for a radical agrarian reform that would break up the old plantations of the former



Burning corpse of William Brown in Omaha, Nebraska, Sept. 28, 1919. Lynchings were public rituals of barbarism often promoted by the capitalist rulers in newspapers. “Without Sanctuary” exhibition helps tell the story of the extent of violence against Blacks in the United States and the reasons for the racist system of Jim Crow.

slaveowners and divide the land among freed slaves and other small rural producers. “Forty acres and a mule” became their slogan.

While the federal government refused to institute a far-reaching agrarian reform, Blacks did acquire some land. Elections were held in which Black men voted, ran for office, and took their places in new “reconstructed” governments. These state and local bodies began to pass laws in the interests of the ex-slaves and ruined small white farmers. Free public education and community services were set up. The Freedmen’s Bureau was established to provide relief and assume custody of confiscated lands. Restrictions were placed on child labor. South Carolina and Mississippi adopted progressive income tax laws that fell on the rich. Civil rights laws barring racial discrimination were enacted and universal suffrage for males regardless of race was instituted.

But the Radical Reconstruction governments did not expropriate the land of the big plantation owners and distribute it to the ex-slaves or poor white farmers. This failure allowed the exploiting classes in the South, in alliance with their northern backers, to launch a campaign of legal and extralegal terror against Blacks.

By 1877 the Radical Reconstruction regimes were overthrown through a bloody counterrevolution.

Communist leader Farrell Dobbs wrote in *Revolutionary Continuity* that this “defeat was engineered by the dominant sectors of the industrial ruling class, who were incapable of carrying through a radical land reform in the old Confederacy and rightly feared the rise of a united working class in which Black and white artisans and industrial workers would come together in a powerful oppositional force, allied with free working farmers.”

The reign of terror by the Ku Klux Klan, the Knights of the White Camelia, and other racist gangs was needed to roll back gains made by freed slaves, break the possibilities of an alliance of the toilers, and impose a brutal second-class status on Blacks. The capitalist rulers put in place the Jim Crow system of legalized segregation as the rural poor and working class were forcibly divided along racial lines.

Public rituals of dehumanization

One of the most striking components of the exhibit “Without Sanctuary” is the fact that lynchings were not spontaneous. In fact, the racist rulers often publicized them in newspapers and circulars. The advertising and selling of tickets to view these barbaric acts was also common. Many photographs and postcards show crowds of smiling white men, women, and children attending the

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N.Y. mayor’s budget will give ‘pain’ to workers

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Claiming city residents must “share the pain,” the billionaire mayor of New York, Michael Bloomberg, revealed his \$41.4 billion budget plan, which takes aim at social programs most vital to working people and heaps a series of new and increased fees upon them.

His plan includes cutting funds for the Administration for Children’s Services by nearly 18 percent, homeless services by 17 percent, libraries by \$39 million or 15 percent, cultural affairs by 15 percent and sanitation by 12 percent.

The budget also projects cutting programs for the elderly by \$26 million, or 16 per-

cent. This includes eliminating the weekend meal now available to 12,000 elderly men and women, closing seven city centers that cater to the elderly and eliminating four others that were to open shortly, and curtail their prescription drug reimbursements.

The mayor is seeking to eliminate \$225 million in pension and health benefits owed to city employees and reschedule the pension funding schedule to the tune of another \$275 million.

Other highlights of the budget include:

- Funding for the public schools would be cut by \$354 million. Capital construction projects like building new schools would be scaled back by 20 percent.

- Legal services to help people fight evictions from their homes would be chopped.

- The city tax on cigarettes would increase from 8 cents to \$1.50 per pack. Coming on top of a 39-cent state tax increase, the cost of a pack of cigarettes could rise to nearly \$7 by July.

- The mayor is also floating the idea of placing tolls on bridges coming into Manhattan over the East River from Brooklyn and Queens—the Williamsburg, Brooklyn, Manhattan, and Queensboro bridges—as well as raising tolls on the nine other crossings into the city for which commuters have already been paying hefty fees.

- Parking ticket fines would increase from \$55 to the \$80 to \$100 range. Towing fees would increase, as well as additional taxes on telephone and cell phone use.

“He’s got some nerve!” stated 82-year-old Margaret Robinson, upon hearing of Bloomberg’s proposed cuts to the weekend meal program for the elderly. “He has plenty to eat in his house, I’m sure. I wish I could staple his mouth shut so he couldn’t eat. Then he might understand.” She added that

she needs the meal program because her Social Security check each month has to go to housing and medical expenses.

Those making use of this program pay just 50 cent for a decent meal that a number of elderly people make last through the weekend, noted a recent *New York Times* article.

The mayor is also planning to increase charges by 10 cents for breakfasts and lunches served at these centers, as well as for meals delivered to homebound people.

Cutbacks in education have propelled even middle-class parents into the streets to demand restoration of funding.

Although the state added \$82 per pupil to city schools last year, the city cut \$167 per pupil. In some schools the entire budget allotted for classroom expenses goes to pay teachers, leaving little or nothing for books or other items.

Meanwhile, recent figures released by the Coalition for the Homeless, show that the number of homeless children sleeping in New York City shelters rose by 29 percent last year, to a record 13,088 each night.

“The increase in children lodging nightly with their families in the city’s shelter system,” noted the *Times*, “is part of the largest one-year rise in homeless people recorded in the city since its modern shelter system began in the early 1980s. The overall increase, about 22 percent, is probably the largest since the Great Depression.”

Linda Gibbs, commissioner of the city’s Department of Homeless Services, agreed with these figures, saying that in January more than 31,000 people slept at city shelters. A figure far below the actual number of homeless persons in the city, who stay away from these overcrowded and unsanitary facilities.

Machinists union reaches tentative agreement with United Airlines

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

The International Association of Machinists (IAM) District 141M, representing 13,000 mechanics and cleaners, reached a tentative contract agreement with United Airlines February 18. The settlement came two days before the union’s strike deadline. A ratification vote by union members is scheduled for March 5.

About one week earlier some 68 percent of the workers voted to reject a contract proposal recommended by a White House-appointed federal panel.

One of the provisions in the rejected pact included accepting a pay cut if United bosses could squeeze other employees to make such a concession as part of a “financial recovery plan.” That deal also proposed that wage increases retroactive to July 2000

be deferred and paid in eight quarterly installments starting in April 2003.

The airline workers took deep wage cuts in 1994, and over the following years United Airlines bosses made record profits. Wages were restored to 1994 levels in July 2000 when the contract came up for renewal.

Over the past two years the company had stalled negotiations with the IAM, then jumped in line to declare financial disaster when two of its planes crashed on September 11. The bosses have threatened bankruptcy ever since.

United also is involved in a contract impasse with 30,000 baggage handlers and customer service workers who are represented by the IAM.

Kathleen Denny contributed to this article.

'Defense of workers' rights is crucial,' says fired socialist fighter

Continued from front page

bate politics, and stand up for our own class interests. It is how we defend and extend all political and democratic rights won through earlier struggles," he said.

The socialist worker said those who have come back to this fight can circulate petitions on the job, get workers to send letters to the mayor of Miami, help host a tour stop of Italie in their city, and encourage contributions, large and small from working people.

In his talk to the meeting Italie addressed the Bush administration's just-released White House memorandum outlining an "Absconder Apprehension Initiative" which calls for rounding up thousands of immigrants of Middle Eastern background on the basis that they have overstayed their visas and are "dangerous." The measure, stated Italie, "is one of a continuing series of attacks on immigrant rights. The rulers of this country target immigrants as the leading edge in their assault on workers' rights. They hope that native-born workers and farmers will be slow in rallying to their defense."

"By making special targets of people from the Middle East," Italie explained, "the capitalists are engaging in classic racial profiling, but the real targets are the rights of all working people. The rulers are trying to set a precedent with an assault on the rights of those considered most vulnerable. If they get away with it they will soon go after the

rights of us all."

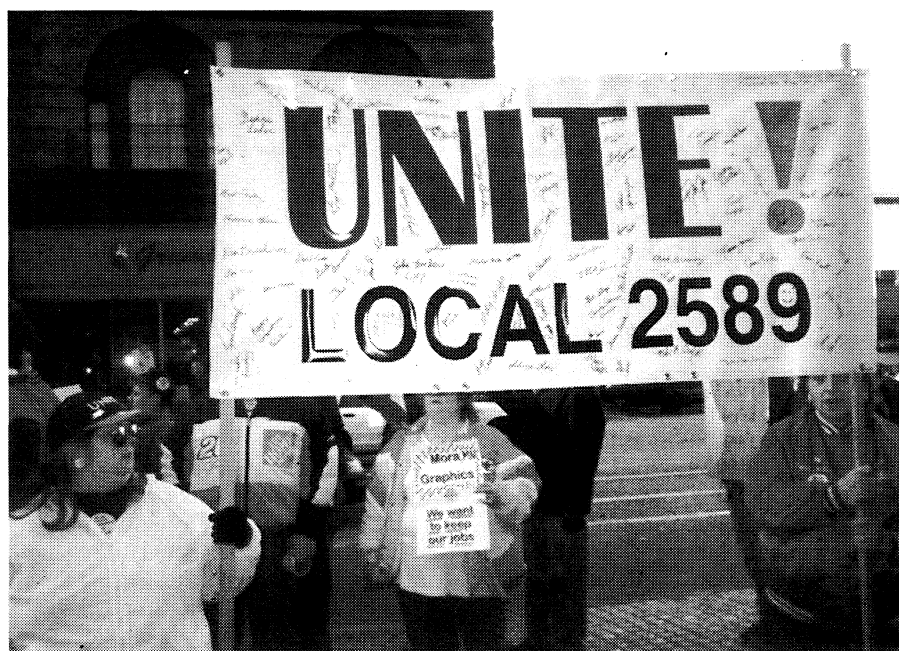
The former socialist candidate pointed to measures such as the USA Patriot Act, which extends the length of time the cops can hold immigrants without filing charges against them, and the Aviation and Transportation Security Act, which bans all but U.S. citizens from holding jobs as baggage screeners at airports.

"But the bosses are facing resistance to these attacks on our rights," he said. "In San Francisco Filipino workers are taking the lead in protesting this ban on immigrants' rights to hold screeners jobs, and in San Jose I met with activists who have been organizing ongoing rallies to demand drivers' licenses for immigrants." These workers are being prevented from getting or renewing their drivers' licenses because of state requirements for a Social Security number. Their protests, he said, are an important part of opposing Washington's moves to institute a national ID card.

Italie presented videotaped television coverage of his fight in Miami and said he had spoken out against the U.S. war in Afghanistan and in defense of the Cuban Revolution during the candidates debate. Goodwill CEO Pastrana told the *Miami Herald* that he dismissed Italie because "we cannot have anyone who is attempting to subvert the United States of America" work at the plant.

Other speakers at the meeting here in-

UNITE workers come to Cincinnati from South, Midwest to picket Fingerhut



Some 175 workers at mail-order firm Fingerhut picket the headquarters of Federated Department Stores—Fingerhut's parent company—in downtown Cincinnati on February 11. The workers, organized by the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees (UNITE), had traveled from Minnesota and Tennessee to protest the bosses' actions in winding down Fingerhut's operations in preparations for its sale. Many of the company's 6,000 workers have been idled or laid off.

cluded Donna Huanca, who works at an art car museum where she gives tours to the public. She explained that she had been interrogated by two FBI agents who came to the private museum an hour before opening and demanded a tour.

"They said they had reports of anti-American activity in the museum," Huanca said. "Then they asked me questions about

my family and my studies at the University of Houston and wanted me to explain all the exhibits to them. I was terrified." Huanca said the museum officials have made a point of opening the facilities to events around the fight for social justice and progress such as that of Michael Italie.

Jay Dooling, host of *Irish Aires* radio show and leader of the Houston chapter of Irish Northern Aid, voiced his support for Italie's fight and said that Goodwill's actions were "probably a violation of federal law." Dooling also noted that the Houston Irish Northern Aid is working to organize a commemoration of Bloody Sunday and a speaking tour of a group of mothers of Holy Cross school students from Northern Ireland who are standing up to attacks by pro-British vigilantes in Belfast today.

During his visit here Italie was interviewed for a 30-minute segment of the Progressive Forum radio program on KPFT.

Participants in the meeting contributed more than \$1,100 to the Miami-based Committee to Defend Freedom of Speech and the Bill of Rights, established by supporters of Italie to organize the fight for reinstatement.

Socialist candidate protests office break-in

BY JACQUE HENDERSON

HOUSTON—"Yesterday my campaign offices were broken into," said Anthony Dutrow, Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. Congress in District 18, in a radio interview here February 14.

KPFT interviewer Bob Buzanco asked about the incident. "Malicious damage was done to the campaign's computer, furniture, and to the storefront of the Pathfinder bookstore where the Socialist Workers offices are located," Dutrow explained. "The fax machine and part of the printer were taken. A cabinet containing files was opened but no money was missing. An alert neighbor notified the police of the break-in at 4:50 a.m."

Buzanco asked Dutrow if he thought the break-in was politically motivated. Dutrow replied that there was evidence that points to that. "A poster advertising tomorrow's Militant Labor Forum in defense of the Palestinians' struggle against Israeli aggression was removed from the window of the Pathfinder bookstore, which houses the weekly free speech forum as well as the party offices," he explained. "It was defaced, with a knife slit across the picture of a Palestinian child in front of a wall sign saying, 'We fight Israel because they occupy our land.' The poster was then stepped on and subsequently folded tightly and again stepped on."

"The government's increased attacks on workers' rights—rounding up and imprisoning immigrants, increasing FBI, CIA, border cop and other police agency powers, harassing workers, including members of my party—have encouraged violent attacks and harassment of working people as suspected 'terrorists,'" the socialist candidate and Houston-area meat packer explained.

"This attack on my campaign office has arisen in this climate," he said. "We strongly protest this attempt to disrupt our ability to reach working people and youth with our socialist program. We demand that we be afforded the right to function freely with our socialist election campaign and that the police prosecute those responsible."

Dutrow concluded by encouraging the radio listeners to attend the free speech forum the following night and protest the attack. Interviewer Buzanco asked the socialist candidate to keep the program abreast of further developments.

Supporters are appealing for help in repairing the damage to the bookstore and campaign offices. Speaking at the February 15 Militant Labor Forum, Phil Duzinski invited participants to continue to support the

Friday night weekly free speech forum and to respond to the attack by continuing to keep the bookstore open for business. "I also invite you to an open house here at the Pathfinder bookstore on the afternoon of March 3 in celebration of the publication of the book *From the Escambray to the Congo: In the Whirlwind of the Cuban Revolution*," Duzinski announced. "With your help we will continue to reach out into this working-class neighborhood."

In the days previous to the break-in, supporters of the socialist campaign along with

other defenders of workers' rights hosted a tour of Michael Italie, the party's candidate for mayor of Miami in last November's election, who was fired from his job as a garment worker because of his political views. Italie spoke with the media and at public meetings in Houston and Brownsville, Texas.

On February 9 he spoke at the art car museum in the Heights area near Houston's Pathfinder bookstore. The museum had been visited by the FBI following September 11 to see if it contained "terrorist art."

Supreme Court justice says judges who view capital punishment as immoral should resign

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

During a symposium on "Religion, Politics, and the Death Penalty" held last month at the University of Chicago, Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia, a Catholic, opined that any judge who believes that capital punishment is immoral should resign. The judge, who had also spoken along those lines at Georgetown University, reiterated his support for the constitutionality of the death penalty, while claiming to take no position on imposing death sentences.

"The choice for the judge who believes that the death penalty is immoral is resignation rather than simply ignoring duly enacted constitutional laws and sabotaging the death penalty," Scalia said. "He has taken an oath to apply those laws, and has been given no power to supplant them with rules of his own." He added that if a judge "feels strongly enough" against state-sanctioned murder, he or she can "lead a political campaign" to abolish it, "and if that fails, lead a revolution. But rewrite the laws he cannot do."

While claiming to be "judicially neutral" on capital punishment, Scalia rejected a 1995 letter by the pope that declared the death penalty should only be used "when it would not be possible otherwise to defend society." The letter, he states "effectively urges the retirement of Catholics from public life" since it instructs those "running for legislative office...to oppose the death penalty."

"Most of them would not be elected," the Supreme Court justice said, adding that "I do not think it would be a good thing if American Catholics were ineligible to go

on the bench in all jurisdictions imposing the death penalty," or if they "were subject to recusal when called for jury duty in capital cases."

During the question-and-answer period at the conference Scalia was confronted by a Black man who said he was a victim of cop brutality and had wrongly spent 10 years in an Illinois prison. "You have innocent people on death row," the man stated. "I'm

scared you're a justice."

Scalia acknowledged being "part of the criminal law machinery that imposes death." He said that executing or imprisoning innocent people are among "the risks of living in organized human society.... It's better than the alternative, which is to be subjected to constant crime."

For the "believing Christian," he asserted, "death is no big deal."

Cuban paper: U.S. senator discusses some 'interrogation' techniques

The following item appeared in *Granma International*, a weekly newspaper published in Cuba. The news report it refers to was printed in the October 28 *Los Angeles Times*.

After the September 11 disaster, linguistic excesses have been boundless within Washington's intelligence circles. The chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, Bob Graham (D-Fla.), told the *Los Angeles Times* an anecdote he had heard at a dinner party with intelligence experts.

Graham described how a U.S. army officer known as "Black Jack" Pershing had put an end to a Muslim insurgency on the Philippine island of Mindanao during the Spanish-American War in the late 19th century.

Graham explained that at one point U.S. soldiers captured 12 Muslims, killing six of them with bullets dipped in hogfat.

Later soldiers wrapped the Muslim rebels in funeral shrouds made of pigskin and buried them face down, so they could not see Mecca. Then they poured pig entrails over the bodies. The other six were forced to watch. And that was the end of the insurrection on Mindanao, Graham noted.

In his article, the journalist pointed out that, in fact, the Mindanao insurrection continues to this day and is allegedly aided by Bin Laden's Al-Qaeda organization.

Graham stressed that he was not advocating the use of such methods. However, he added that when terrorists are not motivated by political ideology or money, U.S. intelligence can prey on other weak points, including families, relations, religious beliefs, etc.

A charming mentality, especially coming from the Capitol's number one intelligence man.

March backs nurses on strike in New York

Continued from front page

cal Center and the main unresolved issue is mandatory overtime. Nurses say they are often forced to work 16 hours straight if the bosses have not scheduled another nurse for the second shift. They demand contract language to restrict overtime and to institute double-time pay as an economic disincentive for the hospital to impose forced overtime.

The New York State Nurses Association (NYSNA) float, serving as the rally stage, was hung with signs demanding "No forced O.T.," "Patient Safety," and "Safe Care #1." Most strikers wore red NYSNA sweatshirts.

Winnie Kennedy, a registered nurse (RN) at Maimonides Hospital in Brooklyn, came to back the strikers. "You should not be a prisoner in the hospital," she said. "You can't go to work every day and not know when you'll return."

John Franzese, a teacher for 30 years and a member of United Federation of Teachers Local 2 in New York City, said, "This is a cause. Hospitals should not use mandatory overtime to staff hospitals." His wife, a nurse for 30 years, is on strike.

Katherine Stovall, an RN at New Island Hospital in Bethpage, explained, "Their win would be for all nurses. We love our work,

but we have a right to a life."

Concern for patient care is central to the nurses' fight against forced overtime. "Think if it were your loved one in that bed," striker Theresa Floccari said, "and the nurse administering lifesaving medication was working 16 hours."

Erin Laden, president of this year's RN class at Suffolk Community College, came to the rally together with 14 nursing students and professors. "We see going into our clinicals how mandatory overtime will affect us," Laden said. "It's not safe for patient care. That's why you get into nursing, because you care about the patients."

The bosses at the hospital say they have to schedule overtime because of a shortage of nurses. Striker Ellen Florio, a nurse for 37 years, said, referring to the hospital's hiring of replacement nurses during the strike: "If they can bring 100 nurses in to staff while we're not there, they can do it when we are there."

Nurses reported that in March 2000 the current owners bought out the hospital. Employees lost thousands of dollars in accrued personal and vacation time, as well as overtime incentives, in the deal. "We gave back, gave back, gave back," said striker Diane Shalhoub.



Militant/Bill Estrada

Nurses, leading the march, are fighting against mandatory overtime and 16-hour days.

"Every day of the strike brings a new challenge and we get more respect," said nurse Maryann DeNappoli. "This strike gives us a sense of independence," said another striker.

Six members of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees who are on strike at the Flex-O-Tex

Laundry in the Bronx came to the march. Elsa Perez said, "It's a help for all of us to support each other." Juana Gonzales captured the mood of the action, saying, "This rally is beautiful. The people are very happy. Mucha gente!" The UNITE strikers were recognized at the rally by Barbara Crane, president of the NYSNA at St. Catherine.

Musicians from Local 802 added to the spirit of the day with both union and popular songs such as "R-E-S-P-E-C-T" and the Banana Boat Song, with its refrain, "Day-o, day-o, daylight come and I wan' go home."

Among the unions represented at the march were the United Food and Commercial Workers; United Auto Workers; United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners; Laborers' International Union; Motion Picture Workers; American Postal Workers; National Maritime Union; Sheet Metal Workers and Painters; and State County and Municipal Employees.

Anne Converso, a nurse for 29 years at the Veterans Administration Hospital in Buffalo, presented a check for \$10,000 from the United American Nurses. "Every nurse I come in contact with is proud of you," she said. Ending the rally, NYSNA official Lorraine Seidel said that the strike is "not just about ending mandatory overtime, but about quality of life for you and your patients."

Coal miners in Kemmerer, Wyoming, give 'Militant' sellers a warm welcome

BY JACK PARKER

KEMMERER, Wyoming—Socialist workers sold 53 copies of the *Militant* featuring recent developments in the fight of coal miners for better working conditions at two mine portals this past month. Ten papers were sold at the Kemmerer mine in Kemmerer, Wyoming, and 43 copies were sold at the McKinley mine in Tse Bonito, New Mexico.

Both McKinley and Kemmerer are owned by Pittsburg and Midway Coal Co. (P&M). Two years ago the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) waged successful, coordinated 12-week strikes at both these locations to defend the eight-hour day.

"These sales were part of our ongoing effort to keep in touch with UMWA members at Kemmerer and McKinley," Alyson Kennedy, a socialist miner from Western Colorado explained. "During their strikes the *Militant* earned a lot of respect by our coverage of their fight."

Braving subzero weather and intermittent snow showers, the sales team was warmly received in Wyoming. "You must be really dedicated," a Kemmerer miner said as she stopped to buy the paper.

Another woman miner pulled her truck over to talk. She had been a leader in the Coal Employment Project (CEP) in the 1980s and 1990s. The CEP had been set up to help women get hired in the mines and to fight to keep their jobs once they got there. This miner wanted to talk about conditions in the mines today.

"Be sure to call me next time before you come up," she said. "You just show up. If I have some advance notice we can spend more time together." The team gave her literature on the fight by Michael Italie in Miami. Italie was the Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor in that city and was fired from his job at Goodwill Industries for the political views he expressed in a televised candidates debate.

Many of the 43 miners at McKinley already had money out of their pockets when they stopped to buy the *Militant*. This was the fifth sale that had been organized at the New Mexico mine since the end of the P&M strike. Between 35 to 50 papers have been sold at each effort.

The McKinley mine is on the Navajo reservation. Due to an affirmative action program enforced by the UMWA, more than 90 percent of the miners are Native Americans.

Sales team members shook hands and chatted with a number of the workers who bought the *Militant*, discussed working conditions at the mine, and were filled in on how the leaders of the strike are doing.

Following the sale, Lawrence Oliver, president of UMWA Local 1332 that organizes the McKinley miners, had a meeting with the team. Oliver gave the Socialist

Workers a letter from the local endorsing the Italie case and signed an endorser card himself.

Oliver is also the president of the Nalnishii, the Federation of Labor on the Navajo Nation. One of the projects the Nalnishii is working on concerns a company threat to close the Mohave Generating Station in Laughlin, Nevada, Oliver said, noting the miners at Black Mesa and Kayenta would be directly affected by this since they supply all the coal that goes to Mohave.

The Black Mesa and Kayenta mines are located on the Navajo and Hopi Nations. Organized by the UMWA, more than 90

percent of its workforce is also comprised of Native Americans. Peabody, the owner of these mines, slurries coal 275 miles to Mohave using massive amounts of water. In June of 1999, the Navajo Nation sued Peabody for \$600 million in damages, claiming they received royalties that were far below the market value for the high-BTU, low-sulfur coal that is mined at Black Mesa and Kayenta.

"We want to make sure that our government leaders are aware of the overall implications of current litigation and that the interests of the Black Mesa and Kayenta miners are protected," Oliver said.

Venezuelan bosses step up anti-Chávez drive

Continued from front page

"the rule of law."

On February 7, thousands of anti-government demonstrators rallied in central Caracas, the country's capital, banging pots and pans and chanting, "Chávez is on his way out." In response, government supporters gathered in front of the presidential palace, calling for the defense of "the Bolivarian revolution."

The *International Herald Tribune* reported that Molina said "the combative style" of the Chávez government, which has organized its supporters in neighborhood committees, "could provoke unnecessary bloodshed between Chávez defenders and an increasingly potent opposition."

"All this is carrying us to the cliff edge," said National Guard captain Pedro Flores, one of the dissenting officers, in anticipation of further polarization.

Chávez and top military commanders have insisted that the military remains loyal to the government and that the officers' statements do not reflect the sentiment within the armed forces. Since their declarations, Soto and Flores have turned themselves in for questioning by the high military command.

Rulers see limited land reform as threat

Since he came to power in 1998, Chávez, a bourgeois nationalist, has implemented a series of measures that have included a land reform act. The legislation allows the government to take over the idle lands of wealthy landlords and hand it over to peasants. This measure has raised the expectations of workers and peasants for better working and living conditions, a development viewed as a threat by the capitalist rulers. Chávez has also placed a steep tax on oil exports to keep more of the national patrimony in the country, and has expanded educational programs.

Twelve percent of Venezuelans live in the

countryside, yet land ownership remains in the hands of just a few landlords. The *Economist* reports that 250,000 farms occupy only 1.6 percent of the arable land. At the same time, 1 percent of the farms incorporate nearly half the arable land. According to Fedenaga, the Venezuelan cattle ranchers' federation, some 139 farms have been taken over by landless peasants.

The Venezuelan ruling class has received the support of Washington and Madrid in their criticisms of Chávez. U.S. secretary of state Colin Powell claimed that he was concerned with the actions of the Venezuelan president and "his understanding of what a democratic system is all about." The foreign minister of Spain, Josep Piqué, said that he hopes Venezuela "recovers its political stability within the framework of democratic institutions."

Economy wracked by falling oil prices

Big-business groups have put great pressure on the regime to let the national currency—the bolivar—fall in order to lower the cost of goods they export. The country's economy has been slammed by the decline in world oil prices, on top of a world recession, and by the fears of the ruling rich of impending political turmoil in the country. Oil sales account for more than half of Venezuela's income and three-quarters of its total exports. Since the beginning of February when individuals in the military brass began calling for Chávez's resignation, domestic and foreign capitalists have pulled millions of dollars in investments out of the country.

On February 12, Chávez announced a 22 percent cut in government spending. He stated the budget cuts would not affect spending on health, education, and social programs and presented the government as a "friend of the poor." That same day, as the bolivar was declining in value, he reported the Central Bank would float the currency

on the world market.

In the week after the Central Bank abandoned the fixed currency exchange setup and floated the bolivar, the currency fell 17 percent against the dollar. From November the Venezuelan government had spent more than \$3 billion from the treasury in an unsuccessful attempt to prop up the bolivar and avoid such a currency devaluation.

Cuba-Venezuela trade ties

Sections of the capitalist class are also opposed to the increasing trade ties between Cuba and Venezuela. A recent bilateral co-operation pact, which includes a major oil supply deal for the island, has made Venezuela Cuba's biggest trading partner. Two-way trade rose from \$461 million in 1999 to \$912 million in 2000, and reached \$541 million in the first half of this year.

Chávez's government has strongly defended its right to establish closer relations with several governments that have been labeled "terrorist" by Washington, from Cuba to Iran, Iraq, and Libya. "We're not against anything or anyone," Chávez has said. "We're defending Venezuela's interests."

The bourgeoisie, with its backers in the military and trade union bureaucracy, is preparing for a showdown with the Chávez-led government. The same capitalist spokespeople who demanded that Chávez implement austerity measures and devalue the currency are now blaming the government for the economic downturn.

Carlos Ortega, the head of the pro-capitalist Confederation of Venezuelan Workers, called for an anti-government march of public sector workers February 27. He also announced that the union plans to hold a one- or two-day nationwide work stoppage in March as part of the rulers' efforts to destabilize and weaken the government. The officialdom of the confederation also supported a recent strike and march organized by the capitalist class.

Communists respond to political openings

Set course to deepen proletarian character and international scope of movement

BY GREG McCARTAN

NEW YORK—Setting a course to deepen the proletarian character and international scope of the communist movement in the United States was at the center of discussions at meetings of the SWP National Committee and of the membership of the party and Young Socialists in New York City here February 9-10.

"We put the banner of communism before everyone who fights," said Socialist Workers Party national secretary Jack Barnes at the party's National Committee meeting. "We join in all struggles against the brutalities and injustices of the existing social order. We tell those involved: 'We're communists, and you are a communist too—you just don't know it yet.' And we let them know that only by forging a communist cadre capable of leading tens of millions in revolutionary struggle is it possible to change who is the ruling class and open up the possibility for workers and farmers to fight effectively and win."

This is not a matter of telling those battling for Black equality, women's freedom, against brutal speedup on the job, against assaults on safety and the environment, or to forge an alliance of workers and farmers that "socialism is the only solution," the SWP leader said. "What we offer them is the chance to begin to fight and win through the battle to take political power," he said.

By taking power out of the hands of a tiny group of capitalists and establishing a workers and farmers government, Barnes said, the socialist revolution "opens the door, for the first time in history, for working people to organize the battles to win an end to all the forms of exploitation, oppression, and degradation perpetuated and reproduced by capitalist rule."

Political explosions, such as that in Argentina against the impact of the capitalist collapse there, don't in and of themselves feed into a broader political challenge to the domination and prerogatives of capital.

This pattern will continue—with the imperialists and capitalist rulers in the end always restabilizing their rule and coming out on top—until a communist cadre is forged into a disciplined proletarian revolutionary party that can lead working people and chart a road forward for humanity.

The events in Argentina help us see that there are cores of proletarian fighters everywhere, Barnes said. These workers are engaged in defensive struggles against capital's unrelenting assaults on the rights and conditions of the toilers, while the trade union bureaucracy tries to sit on top of and divert these fights and battles.

But such obstacles don't stop workers and farmers from coming forward who belong in the communist movement. In their great majority today these working people are not part of any current in the workers movement, Barnes said, but of a relatively atomized resistance in city and countryside that is deep and proletarian.

Political space

This resistance is not the product of a generalized new rise of the class struggle, but is bred by capitalism's growing world disorder, he said. The political space for working people to discuss, take action, and organize independently in their own interests is real and growing today.

At the same time, the U.S. ruling class is making it rougher on the edges for fighting workers and farmers. Political firings by the employers, cop harassment of literature tables and protests, actions by the government working with shippers to disrupt the ability of communists to get books around the world and with telephone companies to interfere with phone calls, and other such measures are facts of life for revolutionary workers today.

The employers' offensive is also marked by frame-ups, such as that of five Cuban revolutionaries convicted in federal court in Florida this fall on charges of conspiracy to commit espionage and, in one case, to commit murder. A week before the socialists' meeting began, federal authorities shackled and handcuffed Gerardo Hernández, René González, Ramón Labañino, Antonio Guerrero, and Fernando González and sent them to five separate prisons across the United States.

"The purpose of this brutal treatment was to degrade and force them to their knees,"



Above: Irma Montiel; Left: Militant/Romina Green
The impact of capitalism's world disorder around the world is producing groups of proletarian fighters everywhere. They are not part of a political current, but make up a relatively atomized resistance in the cities and countryside. Above: state employees in Argentina pour into the streets of the city of Córdoba December 20 to protest then-president Fernando de la Rúa's declaration of a state of siege. Left: workers in Neuquén province march January 7 to protest the government's antilabor policies.

Barnes said. "Their treatment is parallel to that being meted out to those kidnapped and taken by U.S. authorities to Washington's naval base in Guantánamo, Cuba. This is imperialist democracy today," he said.

Barnes pointed out that during World War II the U.S. government allowed leaders of the SWP framed-up and imprisoned under the thought-control Smith Act to remain together in the same federal penitentiary, with the exception of Grace Carlson, who was sent to a prison for women. Even under the czar of Russia, or under the totalitarian regime of Joseph Stalin, opponents of the governments were not separated and isolated from each other, as U.S. authorities are doing with the five Cuban revolutionaries.

One meeting participant pointed out that political prisoners were allowed to stay together in jail in Iran under the Khomeini government in the early 1980s.

Proletarianization of the party

As the meetings took place in New York, an international team of communists was in Cuba, working together with communists in that country at the Havana International Book Fair (see articles in the current and February 25 issues of the *Militant*). Reports on the success of the launchings of three Pathfinder titles and the extent of political discussions at the book fair reinforced the political assessment of the openings for the communist movement in the world today.

Both the SWP leadership meeting and New York membership meeting assessed the steps forward the party and Young Socialists have made in the United States that are leading to possibilities to recruit more workers to the party.

Building on these strengths means a further proletarianization of the party. At the same time, it means taking on the challenge and responsibility of rebuilding the world communist movement. This course is needed in order to recruit, hold, and train new generations of communist workers. It requires a shift in the functioning of the branches of the party, participants in the two meetings concluded.

The work of the YS as part of an international organization has had its biggest impact in New York, said Norton Sandler, organizer of the New York Local Executive Committee, in his report to the city membership meeting.

Over the last year YS members carried out work together with students and young workers in the area to build delegations to a U.S.-Cuba youth gathering in Cuba and the 15th World Festival of Youth and Students in Algiers, Algeria. Public events and campus meetings leading up to and coming out of the two international gatherings became important political events in the city.

Through this work YS members had political discussions with hundreds of young people in the United States and from Africa, Asia, the Middle East, and Latin America and the Caribbean. Young Socialists explained their perspectives of being part of building

an international communist movement.

Party branches across the country have registered progress in establishing fractions of socialist workers that carry out communist work on the job in the garment, auto, meatpacking, and coal mining industries. They have taken strides in establishing branches in workers districts and getting to know layers of working people through regular street tables, Militant Labor Forums, and communist election campaigns.

This course of action in response to resistance by workers and farmers around the world to the imperialist assault on working people has made the YS and party more at-



Militant/Carole Lesnick
Socialist Workers staff table loaded with Pathfinder books, socialist periodicals in Brooklyn's Sunset Park.

tractive to proletarian fighters who are involved in and connected to a range of social struggles. Socialist workers and youth are more a part of the life and conditions of a large section of the working class most affected by the employer and government attacks, including among immigrant workers.

At the same time, both in the United States and in Communist Leagues around the world there has been a lag in the ability of the parties to deepen their proletarian character by recruiting and training workers who are interested in the movement. What steps to take to meet these opportunities was the focus of the meetings.

Weekly work of the party

At the New York membership meeting, to which members of the National Committee were invited as observers, Sandler reported on the rich opportunities with a number of workers from Africa, Mexico, and the Caribbean who have found themselves in the United States and who are looking for revolutionary organizations to join to advance the battle against imperialism.

Both the Young Socialists in New York and the local membership meeting approved a proposal to fuse the forces of the SWP and YS in the city in order to turn toward the openings to deepen the proletarian character and composition of the communist movement and to increase its disciplined functioning and integration with workers resisting the onslaught of capitalism.

YS-age members in New York remain members of the international Young Socialists, which has chapters and individual members in a number of other cities in the United States and elsewhere. They will participate in national and international YS gatherings, and in its activities here and around the world. And the YS National Executive Committee will continue directing the work of the organization.

Sandler pointed to a number of concrete ways to advance along the political course presented in the opening report to the city meeting, and to the party leadership meeting earlier in the day.

One is through the party's participation in social protest actions, such as rallies against police brutality and in defense of immigrant rights. Party members join in these actions, set up literature tables, sell the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*, and find individuals who are looking for fundamental political answers and can be won to a proletarian party.

Another is to advance the work of the fractions of socialist workers in the garment and meatpacking industries and unions. They become part of the life and struggles not only among workers on the job, but of the connections of these workers to "simmering social struggles breaking out today."

A third is by restarting and organizing every member into weekly shift-change sales at garment and meatpacking plant gates in and around the city to reinforce the political work of the fractions, build the influence of communism among that section of the working class, and get to know a broader layer of workers who can be brought around party activities.

Building the weekly Militant Labor Forum as the most important meeting of the week, where workers can get together to discuss key questions and developments in world politics, is essential to carrying out this proletarian course, Sandler said.

The fourth is setting up street-corner tables of revolutionary literature and organizing other ways to get out the socialist press and Pathfinder books in the workers districts where the branches are located.

Proletarian, international, and political

In his summary report to the SWP leadership meeting late in the day Sunday, Barnes pointed out that the concrete step of fusing the communist movement's forces in New York City was completed with the actions by the city membership meeting earlier that day.

The task in New York City now, he said, is the same concretely facing every branch of the SWP and other communist organizations: to become more proletarian in composition, activity, and norms of functioning, as well as more international in their reach.

That requires branches that put politics at the center of their meetings each week and that discuss ways to integrate their activity more and more deeply into that of the working class and the social struggles working people are part of. No militant worker who joins a communist organization will stay very long in a party that operates any other way.

Adding to points made by Sandler at the city meeting, Barnes pointed to other useful ways party branches can meet and work with people new to the communist movement that will help bring them closer to joining.

These include building support for the fight against the political firing of socialist worker Michael Italie by Goodwill Industries in Miami. Explaining the case and winning support from co-workers and those involved in strikes, union organizing drives, and social protest actions is one powerful way to reach out to proletarian fighters.

Another way, Barnes said, is participation in the struggle to expose the frame-up of the five Cuban revolutionaries. This involves using the *Militant* and other information on the case, building meetings to win backing for these fighters, and explaining the stakes involved in the U.S. government's assault to co-workers and other unionists.

This kind of weekly rhythm of rounded

communist work will not only lead the party and young socialists to meet and collaborate with other proletarian fighters, but provide the basis for the political integration of workers who join the party.

Sandler said that an education in Marxism and the history of the Socialist Workers Party is also essential for workers who decide to join the movement. Each branch in New York can begin now to organize new members classes and the party's candidate for membership program to facilitate workers being able to learn about the party, go through a systematic education program on the history and program of the communist movement, and get a grounding in the organizational norms and principles of a revolutionary workers party, he said.

This course is part and parcel of advancing the building of a new international of the communist movement, Sandler said. It is the course to advance common work with communists and revolutionary-minded workers and youth elsewhere in the Americas and the world over.

Some who join the Communist Leagues and Socialist Workers Party will return to their countries of origin, armed with the experience, knowledge, and possibilities to collaborate in building revolutionary workers parties around the globe, he said. As during the Communist International in the 1920s, revolutionary fighters from other countries will meet and join the party and return better able to build a communist organization where they are from.

International perspectives

Leaders of Communist Leagues and the international Young Socialists in Canada, Haiti, Iceland, Sweden, and the United Kingdom participated in the meetings and explained the variety of ways in which each is carrying out a proletarianization of the movement; there is no formula. This participation in the discussion was an essential contribution to the political concreteness of the New York meeting.

Over the past several months leaders of the SWP and YS in the United States have collaborated closely with Communist Leagues and YS members abroad to work through how, in each of the countries, the communist movement can better orient and organize themselves to meet, collaborate with, and recruit proletarian fighters.

In Iceland this has taken the form of members of the international Young Socialists in that country joining forces with longtime communist workers there to build a Communist League. Hilde Andra explained that members of the organization have begun building fractions in the fish processing industry and are looking to expand their numbers in the aluminum industry as well.

Tom Harris reported that in the United Kingdom, communist workers and YS members have both taken the step of setting up an organizing committee in Scotland—expanding from a single base in London—and beginning to build fractions in the garment and meatpacking industries. They are learning about entire sections of the working class they had little or no contact with beforehand, he said. In the process, they are meeting workers and youth attracted to the YS and Communist League.

Lars Jansson, a member of the Communist League in Sweden, explained that the YS and the league decided to fuse their forces into a common organization, establish a branch organizing committee in Gothenburg, and to get jobs in meatpacking and garment or textile.

These steps, he said, have “transformed the atmosphere and character of the party, as well as how we act. Younger members haven’t been part of the social movements. We want to be communists and build the communist movement.”

“That is why we need to work with generations who have more experience. We are working jobs we didn’t know existed before and can see right before our eyes how the ‘Swedish model’ is changing.”

Andre Roux, a member of the Communist League and Young Socialists from Montreal, said four workers had joined there recently. He stressed the importance of the league and the YS collaborating together to recruit more workers and integrate them into the movement.

A leader of the Young Socialists from Haiti described how he and others in the



Militant, top right/Linda Joyce; bottom/Cappy Kidd
Joining social protest actions, restarting weekly plant gate sales, building the party's industrial union fractions, and organizing the weekly Militant Labor Forum series are ways to help strengthen the proletarian character and internationalist scope of the communist movement. Above, rally by Marriott workers demanding jobs in New York City. Right, meat packers in Chicago. Top right, protest against cuts in bus service in Atlanta.

country set out to find communist organizations they could collaborate with and share experiences with in building a proletarian party. Several of them first met members of the Young Socialists at a conference in Cuba a couple of years ago, then again at the youth festival in Algiers this summer. They purchased Pathfinder titles and issues of *New International* in Algeria and formed a YS group upon their return. They are building toward the launching of a communist organization later this year and encouraged participation from abroad.

In these and other cases, the collaboration by party members and members of the international Young Socialists is deepening the involvement of the communist movement in struggles by workers and farmers, as well as youth attracted to these fights, both in those countries and worldwide.

Post-9/11 shift by U.S. rulers

In his report to the National Committee meeting, Barnes presented a number of elements of the evolution of world politics that underpin and justify these moves by communists.

The January 22 State of the Union address by U.S. president George Bush marked a definitive shift away from the political axis of the U.S. rulers' actions since September 11. Gone were demands for revenge or justice, or tracking down those responsible for the attacks on the Pentagon and World Trade Center. The momentum from the September 11 events, and the U.S. rulers' ability to use them to rationalize wars abroad and assaults on workers' rights at home, have been spent.

Leading up to and during the brutal war against the people of Afghanistan, the SWP said that in order for Washington to build a war fervor and parlay the assault into further imperialist attacks against working people, they needed a lot of blood of American GIs to be spilled.

The U.S. rulers toppled the government in Afghanistan without that happening. Lacking a bloody flag to wave, they are now trying to build a case for new military aggression by asserting the right of Washington to stop governments that don't simply bend to its will from defending themselves against the U.S. war machine—including by producing and deploying what U.S. officials describe as weapons of mass destruction.

Washington is the only government ever to use nuclear weapons in a war and against a civilian population, and can blow up the world many times over. But revolutionists must say more than that, Barnes said. Communist workers defend the right of north Korea, Iraq, Iran, and other countries targeted by imperialism to build and deploy whatever weapons they deem necessary to stay imperialism's hand.

The Bush administration is carrying on a fight in the U.S. ruling class to head toward a renewed attempt to topple the government of Saddam Hussein in Iraq. As that course unfolds, the most immediate practical effect is Washington's deeper convergence with Israel's war against the Palestinian people.

Washington has placed the Lebanese-based Hezbollah and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad on its terrorist list, even though both are fighting the Israeli government and have no record of actions against the United States. And Vice President Richard Cheney spoke out forcefully this week against the support Iraq and Iran have given the two organizations, as well as the Palestine Liberation Front, objectively backing the Israeli regime's pretexts for its military actions.



The model for U.S. imperialism in planning its attacks on Iraq may well become the airstrikes by the Israeli regime in 1980 against a nuclear power plant the government of Iraq had begun to build.

Barnes also pointed out that Washington also stands behind the reactionary drive by the capitalist rulers in Venezuela to topple the Hugo Chávez government, opening up the possibility of a civil war there whose outcome cannot be determined beforehand.

As the crisis of capitalism unfolds, Barnes said, the main danger of a world economic catastrophe remains the vulnerability of the banking system, the mounting bubble of debt, and the prospect of a trade war that could unleash retaliatory measures and a sharp dive in world trade.

The bankruptcy of Enron, “one-time” charges being taken by a number of large corporations, and the slide in the stock prices of others are signs that world finance capital is finding out what values and assumptions underlie the credit worthiness of many big corporations and banks.

These factors have political ramifications for the expectations of masses of people, further destabilizing the world capitalist economy. From the mid-1990s into 2000, the middle class expected the stock market balloon to continue. When the psychology of millions shift, reaching into layers of the working class and small farmers as well, a collapse in confidence can have a devastating effect on stock prices, on buying goods on credit, and even whether people put their money in the bank—as was the case in the Great Depression.

In Japan there is the potential for a wave of bank failures, as the load of bad debt

climbs amidst continued recession and deflation. The price of gold is climbing, as millions in Japan take their money out of accounts in savings banks, which the government says it soon will no longer stand behind.

The resistance to the inevitable brutalities of capitalism's world disorder will continue, Barnes said. The law of value determined the crisis that led the Argentine government to devalue the peso, he said, but the response of workers and farmers in the country to the capitalist crisis was not settled beforehand. Communists have before them “precious time to transform this resistance” and to build a revolutionary proletarian leadership.

Joel Britton, a party leader from Chicago and a packinghouse worker there, said in the discussion that he spoke at a Militant Labor Forum in Des Moines, Iowa, recently as part of a panel with workers involved in struggles in the meatpacking industry. Among the participants were 10 meat packers involved in a union-organizing drive at several plants in Omaha, Nebraska.

Britton said he opened his remarks at the meeting by reading from an article reporting on a socialist meeting in New York the previous week. “There are proletarian and vanguard leaders in countries all over the world. We need to let them know that they are communists, but they just don’t know it yet,” the article quoted Barnes as saying. “Only by knowing it, and banding together with others in a proletarian party, can we organize to fight and win.”

The response to these remarks from many workers present who are new to the communist movement was positive, he said, and

Continued on Page 14

Bush builds case for new war moves

Continued from Page 2

an explosion of immigration of workers and peasants who are forced to come to metropolitan centers to eke out a living and send money back home, only about 1 percent of Japan's population are foreign-born. The other imperialist powers have driven down working conditions and extended working hours as they treat immigrant workers as second-class citizens with little or no rights, laboring in the lowest paid and most dangerous jobs.

Many bourgeois economists and politicians have called on the Japanese government to bail out the banks through a massive infusion of cash. Others call for a government takeover of the banks that would demand companies pay on their debts, a step that would drive many companies under. Prime Minister Koizumi is pushing for cuts in the budget—a move that will include cuts in the social wage—raising taxes, and privatizing state-owned corporations.

Growing threat of panic

Less than four years ago the government injected \$79 billion into the banking system, a move that only postponed the crisis that finance capital faces today. This time around, bad bank loans are estimated at double to quadruple the level that set off the savings-and-loan crisis in the United States in the

1980s. There is a consensus among the imperialist powers that Japan is on the verge of a banking collapse and they are uncertain whether Tokyo is capable of buying some more time.

Yoshihiko Miyauchi, chairman of a Japanese government deregulation panel, pessimistically told reporters, “In the last five years, Japan's best contribution has been to not have collapsed.”

Japan's national currency, the yen, has fallen 25 percent against the dollar over the last five years. The government announced it will faze out insurance on bank deposits over the next year.

Many fear that this move and the impending financial crisis will threaten their savings accounts. A growing number of people are cashing in their yen and buying gold to try to protect their wealth. If these fears turn into a panic, millions could rush to banks to withdraw their money, bleeding many banks of their cash reserves and sparking hyperinflation.

The playing out of Tokyo's crisis—whatever the outcome in this round—will immediately affect the economies of semicolonial countries in Asia, many of which carry out the majority of their trade with Japan. Bush, during his recent visit to Japan, also voiced concern over the effects on the U.S. economy if there is a financial meltdown.

Raúl Castro addresses role of Cuba's Volunteers are 'keeping aloft the beautiful banner of proletarian internationalism'

The following speech was given by Raúl Castro, minister of Cuba's Revolutionary Armed Forces, at a meeting commemorating the 20th anniversary of two Cuban internationalist contingents to the Congo. It was held in Havana, Nov. 7, 1985.

One contingent was led by Che Guevara in the Republic of the Congo, with its capital city in Leopoldville, later named Kinshasa. That mission is detailed in Guevara's *Episodes of the Revolutionary War: Congo* and in *From the Escambray to the Congo: In the Whirlwind of the Cuban Revolution*, consisting of an interview with Víctor Dreke, the column's second-in-command. The other contingent was led by Jorge Risquet and Rolando Kindelán, based in the Democratic Republic of the Congo with its capital in Brazzaville.

"The experience we gained," says Dreke in *From the Escambray to the Congo*, "made it possible for us to do what we did to aid the liberation struggles in Guinea-Bissau, Angola, and other places."

The 13-year Angolan operation, in which more than 300,000 Cuban volunteers participated in helping to defeat several South African invasions of that country, culminated in the decisive defeat of the apartheid army in the battle of Cuito Cuanavale in 1988. That defeat not only drove the apartheid army out of Angola, but played a major role in forcing the apartheid regime to grant independence to Namibia and opened the door to the final defeat of apartheid itself inside South Africa.

As Nelson Mandela stated in 1991, "The defeat of the apartheid army was an inspiration to the struggling people inside South Africa! Without the defeat of Cuito Cuanavale our organizations would not have been unbanned!... Cuito Cuanavale has been a turning point in the struggle to free the continent and our country from the scourge of apartheid!"

Translation and subheads are by the *Militant*.

As we come to the twentieth anniversary of the formation of the columns of Cuban internationalist fighters that carried out missions in the Congo-Leopoldville and Congo-Brazzaville—known today as the Republic of Zaire and the People's Republic of the Congo respectively—it is my honor, on behalf of the party leadership, the Council of State, and Commander in Chief Fidel Castro, to award the Ernesto Che Guevara Order and the Internationalist Combatant Medal to the members of those detachments. These compañeros had the historical privilege of being the precursors of the joint struggle of the people of Cuba and the peoples of Black Africa against colonial and neocolonial oppression, for national independence, and for the triumph and consolidation of socialism.



Left: Cuban internationalist troops in Angola, 1981. Right: Raúl Castro speaks at January 1960 ceremony that handed over the Moncada barracks in Santiago de Cuba to the Ministry of Education for use as a school.



Sending these contingents was an expression of the great strategic importance our party and commander in chief have placed ever since in the African revolutionary movements' struggle against imperialism and of our identification with their just cause.

The historical dimension of that expression of solidarity by our people is greatly enlarged by the fact that one of those columns was commanded by the individual who has become a universal symbol of the purest and most legitimate sentiments of internationalism: the Heroic Guerrilla, Ernesto Che Guevara.

During an extensive tour of many African countries and through direct contact with the most outstanding progressive and revolutionary figures on the continent, Che observed with his exceptional grasp the ferment of emancipation brewing in most of the newly independent countries and even more so in those countries still under the colonial boot.

Che conceived the idea of supporting this revolutionary upsurge on the African continent. For this endeavor he chose Zaire, an enormous and rich country whose people had broken the chains of Belgian colonialism but which, under the leadership of Lumumba, would not be quietly neocolonized. The former colonialists and their NATO partners decided to assassinate the famous patriot by using puppets of the ilk of Tshombe, Mobutu, and Kasavubu, as well as white mercenaries. The

Lumumbist patriots took the road of armed resistance, but they lacked experience, unity, and a developed consciousness. Che thought they needed the help they were requesting, to be supplied by a handful of seasoned Cuban revolutionary combatants.

Also in early 1965 Che met in Brazzaville with the leadership of the MPLA, headed by Agostinho Neto. Out of that historic meeting came another commitment requested by the Angolan patriots: to help that guerrilla movement in its fight against Portuguese colonialism.

The leadership of our party approved both expressions of solidarity to the brother peoples of Angola and Zaire.

But that historic decision by Che to depart for other parts of the world that were calling for his valuable efforts of assistance would nevertheless have a deeper motive rooted in time and distance, involving the destinies of the African continent and our America.

The colonial plunder of Africa

The colonial plunder of Africa had begun even before the first Europeans arrived in the Americas. Long before the native inhabitants of the Antilles were exterminated by the fire and lash of the conquistadors, Portuguese and Spaniards had already introduced the notorious slave trade, appropriating not only marble, rubber, and other natural resources, but above all the richest resource of all, the African himself.

In barely three centuries, more than fifty million Africans were uprooted from their lands to be sent to the Americas, reduced to the status of slaves, with many dying in the capture or passage. More than five centuries of plunder by the European powers, joined by the United States this past century, have witnessed the building of opulent capitalist societies, developed and erected largely on the suffering, poverty, hunger, and death of the peoples of Africa.

What could be more eloquent, as an illustration of the colonizers' absolute scorn for the personality and future of these peoples, than the repugnant Berlin Conference of 1885, exactly one century ago this year, where representatives of the leading capitalist powers, with a sharp sense of geometry but without the slightest respect for human dignity and rights, distributed the entire continent among themselves, dividing up as they pleased nations, peoples, ethnic groups, and families.

This process of colonization and plunder, which bled the African continent dry and snatched away millions of its sons and daughters, was not without a fierce, tenacious, and heroic resistance that laid the basis for the rich patriotic and combative traditions of the African peoples. These traditions enriched our own history of struggle when those very men whose ancestors had

been uprooted from their lands took up machetes, joined the *mambí* army to fight for Cuba's freedom, and helped forge the Cuban nation.¹

Toward the middle of this century, the exploitation of the African continent came under a new guise. The end of World War I signified the transfer of African colonial possessions from the vanquished to the victors, like luscious spoils of war.

Following the Second World War, however, the situation became qualitatively different: the emergence of the socialist community as a result of the glorious Red Army's decisive victory over German fascism, as well as the collapse of Japanese militarism, created an international relationship of forces favorable to struggles for national independence and social progress. This situation was expressed historically by the triumph of the revolutions in China, Korea, Vietnam, Cuba, and Algeria, and was manifested in the breakup of the colonial system, with the vast majority of countries in Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean obtaining formal independence.

Context of ferment in Africa

It was precisely in this context of political ferment and the African peoples' active projection onto the world stage that Che Guevara saw the need to lend his solidarity to prevent Zaire's recolonization and contribute to the armed struggle of the peoples of the Portuguese colonies. For him this was a starting point for the great final battle: the liberation of the South African people from the ignominious boot of apartheid and the independence of Namibia, occupied by the white racists of Pretoria.

Each of us still remembers the emotion of those defining moments of our internationalist calling, when a battle-tested contingent of Cuban combatants was first preparing to leave for Black Africa to fulfill not only a duty of solidarity but a historical imperative of gratitude toward one of the continents from which our ancestors came. Just as three decades earlier Cubans fought for the freedom of Spain, also a cradle of our forefathers.

That conviction prevailed throughout the arduous training period. Not only did this training provide each of you with the military training necessary to carry out fully such an honorable assignment. It also forged a deep sense of brotherhood and collectivity, which was deepened in the difficult subsistence conditions of the mission, and in the rigors of battle, and was further developed through all these years of dedication to the tasks of building socialism.

Faithful to the confidence placed in them by the party and by Fidel, in the course of a mere few months both columns waged, in their respective areas, intense combat actions characterized by the commitment

FROM Pathfinder From the Escambray to the Congo In the Whirlwind of the Cuban Revolution

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Infantry battalion of Rebel Army after climbing highest mountain in Pinar del Rio, 1959.

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missions to Africa

onalism,' says Cuban leader

and discipline of their members.

The column that went to the Congo under the name Patrice Lumumba Battalion had a number of missions. It was, first of all, a reserve force for Che's column, and was to join them if necessary and at the appropriate time.

It also had the task of helping the progressive government of the Congo, threatened with attack by the regime in Leopoldville (now Kinshasa). For this task the battalion was not only ready to fight alongside the Congolese army against a foreign attack from the other side of the Congo River, but its assignment included forming several militia battalions.

No less important was the mission of participating with a group of Angolan adviser-combatants in the MPLA's Second Front in Cabinda, training Angolan combatants, equipping them, and helping them head toward the interior of Angola, toward the First Front north of Luanda.

Compañeros [Jorge] Risquet and [Rolando] Kindelan were in charge of this many-sided mission.

The heroic actions by Che's Column 1 continued for a number of months. They overcame dangerous obstacles to get to the interior of Zaire, where they took part in

some of our troops, whose brotherhood-in-arms with the MPLA—which began precisely in 1965—has become a factor of considerable importance in preserving the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the People's Republic of Angola.

Stated more clearly, the history of the last twenty years has demonstrated the validity of that mission. It became one of the models for our internationalist calling—which we will never give up—and was a contribution in helping to clear the road of struggle for the peoples of Africa. The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Cuba have made their own resolute contribution to this struggle.

In the next few days we will celebrate the tenth anniversary of Angola's independence and the victory over the mercenary bands and invaders from Zaire and South Africa, who tried, without success, to forestall the triumph of the FAPLA and the MPLA. Since that time, we have contributed all we could to strengthening the Popular Armed Forces for the Liberation of Angola to the process of national reconstruction in that sister country. Since its liberation, Angola has enjoyed not one single day of peace due to the attacks from the racist regime of South Africa and the armed



Tricontinental

Cuban fighters in the Congo, 1965, with Che Guevara on right. In the "context of the African people's active projection on the world stage," says Raúl Castro, Cuban revolutionaries volunteered to prevent the recolonization of the Congo, contribute to the anti-Portuguese struggle, and pave the way for the defeat of the apartheid regime.

the shameful apartheid regime has never been more certain. Its elimination would definitively guarantee the independence of Namibia, the security of the Front Line states, and peace and progress for southern Africa. Our internationalist contingent in Angola is part of this process through the sovereign will of our two sovereign governments. This is a role that has fallen to Cuba because of what our internationalist support will continue to mean, in the next years, for the consolidation and strengthening of the People's Republic of Angola, bastion of the revolutionary cause in Africa's southern cone.

Compañeros:

Several members of Che's column died gloriously like Che himself did in Bolivia, giving his life as did his compañeros who left their heroic bones in Zairian soil. One, of Haitian origin, died later at the hands of the thugs of the tyranny that has soaked Haiti in blood. Combatants from one or another column died fighting alongside the people of Guinea-Bissau against the Portuguese yoke, alongside the Angolan people confronting the South African invasion, and alongside the Ethiopian people fighting Somali expansionism. More than thirty compañeros from your columns selflessly gave their lives fighting in Africa and the Americas.

In their memory, we lower our flags in admiration and respect.

And before all of you, we offer the tribute of our people and our party, not only for your participation twenty years ago in the missions to Zaire and the Congo, but also for the exemplary stance with which you have honored that great action. This

stance finds expression in the more than 120 of you who have carried out at least one other internationalist mission. Dozens of you have carried out three, four, even five in the course of these twenty years.

Right now ten compañeros are not here at this event because they are far away from our homeland, keeping aloft the beautiful banner of proletarian internationalism. And there is another fact no less eloquent: more than 90 percent of the members of both columns are militants of our glorious party and the rest are also revolutionaries, patriots, and internationalists.

The example all of you have set constantly renews our certainty in the justice of our ideas and our confidence in the capacity of human beings to grow in the face of adversity, and to give the best of themselves for the sake of their people and humanity.

Allow me then, on behalf of the party leadership and Commander in Chief Fidel Castro, to say thank you from the bottom of our hearts, and to give you a fraternal embrace.

'Mambi' refers to fighters in Cuba's wars of independence from Spain, many of them freed slaves or agricultural workers. These wars took place during 1868-78 and 1895-98. The term "mambi" originated in the 1840s during the fight for independence from Spain in the nearby island of Santo Domingo. After a Black Spanish officer named Juan Ethninius Mamby joined the Dominican independence fighters, Spanish forces began referring to the guerrillas by the derogatory term "mambies." Later the related term "mambises" was applied to the freedom fighters in Cuba, who adopted it as a badge of honor.



Juventud Rebelde

Cuban women's anti-aircraft and anti-tank unit in Angola, 1988.

many clashes in which they were outnumbered.

The service record of Che's column counts more than fifty combat actions. Using the pseudonym "Tatu," Che carried these out with the mastery of tactics and strategy that made him a true artist of guerrilla warfare.

Faced with adverse circumstances

But it was not possible to unite and consolidate the Lumumbist forces. There came a time when the internationalist column fought alone, in an unknown land. Faced with these adverse circumstances, the column was forced to leave the country. It was not defeated in battle by the enemy, but the objective of its mission became impossible to accomplish given the absence of a structured patriotic movement with which to collaborate.

The Patrice Lumumba Battalion had more favorable conditions. Its support to the progressive Congolese government against foreign threats was firm, and at a certain-point decisive.

The Congolese youth militia battalions were organized, trained, and armed, strengthening popular support for the democratic regime. This consolidated the MPLA's rear guard, enabling it to increase guerrilla actions in the Second Front in Cabinda. Two columns, trained and equipped by Cubans, marched toward the First Front, toward the far-off region of Luanda. One of these columns bore the glorious title, Camilo Cienfuegos Squadron.

This history of internationalist collaboration with the peoples of the Congo and Angola formed a solid base for a new and greater Cuban solidarity act toward the peoples of southern Africa in their fight for liberation.

Thus, in the difficult opening moments of the second Angolan war of liberation, Brazzaville served as a secure rear area for

bands organized, armed, and financed by them and their allies, the U.S. imperialists.

More than 200,000 Cubans have served on internationalist missions in the sister nation of Angola over the past ten years. That fact alone tells us a lot, not only about the historical significance of the mission entrusted to you twenty years ago, but also about how much the relationship of forces on a world scale has evolved in favor of the causes of liberation and social progress, and how much our internationalist consciousness has matured.

Campaign was precursor

Twenty years ago more than 300 men made up the two columns we are honoring. The highest praise we can pay to that campaign, which was a precursor, is to say that every one of you has been multiplied a thousandfold in your pledge to pay back with one's very life, if necessary, our debt of gratitude to humanity.

There are still two colonies in Africa: the Saharan Arab Democratic Republic and Namibia. The Saharan people are carrying on, under the most difficult conditions, an exemplary struggle against the Moroccan occupation supported by the U.S. government. We are completely confident in the victory of their just cause.

In Namibia, illegally occupied by the South African racists, the people's rebellion is growing under the leadership of its sole and legitimate representative, SWAPO. Today, Namibian territory is used by Pretoria as a jumping-off point in its war against Angola. The day is not far off when Namibia's heroic and long-suffering people, arms in hand, will settle accounts with their oppressors. The battle will be long and hard, closely tied historically to the selfless struggle of the popular masses of South Africa, above all, the Black people led by the ANC.

But the possibility of putting an end to

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Sankara confidently raised the banner of women's emancipation

The following is the presentation by Mary-Alice Waters at the Havana International Book Fair meeting February 13 to celebrate *Equality and the Social Participation of Mozambican Women* by Vitoria Afonso Langa de Jesús, and *Women's Liberation and the African Freedom Struggle*, by Thomas Sankara.

BY MARY-ALICE WATERS

Thank you for the opportunity to be with you here, this afternoon, not only to present Pathfinder's new booklet containing Thomas Sankara's 1987 speech on *Women's Liberation and the African Freedom Struggle*, but to join in the celebration of Tricontinental's new book on women in Mozambique.

In October 1983, almost twenty years ago, Thomas Sankara, then leader of Burkina Faso's popular revolutionary government, in outlining the goals of the new revolutionary power said,

The women and men of our society are all victims of imperialist oppression and domination. That is why they wage the same struggle. The revolution and women's liberation go together. We do not talk of women's emancipation as an act of charity or because of a surge of human compassion. It is a basic necessity for the triumph of the revolution.

In one of the poorest countries of imperialist-ravaged West Africa, with the highest infant mortality rate in the world, where illiteracy among women stood at 99 percent, Sankara confidently raised the banner of women's emancipation, put forward a scientific, materialist explanation of the social and economic roots of women's oppression within class society, and pledged the support of the National Revolutionary Council to organize and mobilize women to fight to change their conditions of life, and the conditions of life of all Burkinabè. More than a pledge, this was a course of revolutionary action that over the next four years set an example not only for all of Africa but also far beyond.

Karl Marx, the founder of the modern working-class movement, and one of the

most intransigent defenders of the fight for women's equality the world has known, was among the first to point to the social status of women as a measure of the degree of progress of any society. It is one of the most powerful demonstrations of the uneven and combined development of history that in the mid-1980s, Burkina Faso, one of the most oppressed nations in the world, suddenly took its place within the revolutionary vanguard on a world scale.

This small book is not about the fight for women's equality in Africa alone, important as that objective may be. The perspectives offered by Thomas Sankara belong to those fighting for human dignity everywhere, including in the most industrially developed countries such as the United States, and the most politically advanced such as Cuba.

One confirmation of this is the reception this booklet has received since it was first published in English by Pathfinder Press over a decade ago. Well over 7,000 copies have been sold, in addition to another 6,000 copies of *Thomas Sankara Speaks*, a broad selection of speeches and interviews by Sankara that contains the talk on women's emancipation as one of its most important pieces. Most of these have been sold in the United States and other imperialist countries.

And that is in English alone. With the publication of the booklet in French and Spanish this year as well, its reach, its impact will be much greater.

Young Socialists from many countries who brought this pamphlet as well as other revolutionary literature from Pathfinder with them to the World Festival of Youth and Students in Algiers last summer were able to register this growing impact in a very immediate way. As word spread among the delegations—from Africa especially—many sought out the literature tables where they could get copies.

Likewise, from Pathfinder's bookstores and street tables in working-class neighborhoods of cities throughout the imperialist metropolitan centers—where tens of thousands of students and workers from coun-



Militant/Linda Joyce

Mary-Alice Waters, speaks at meeting to celebrate titles on Burkina Faso and Mozambique. To her right are Ulises Estrada and Vitoria Afonso. Inset: women in Burkina Faso work in anti-erosion project in 1986, during period of revolutionary government.

tries across Africa increasingly find themselves obliged to emigrate by the inhuman consequences of the lawful workings of finance capital—we have found that Thomas Sankara, together with titles like *Che Guevara Talks to Young People* and the *Communist Manifesto*, are among the most sought-after books. What better indication of the fresh winds that are blowing among new generations in Africa and elsewhere today?

To end, I would like to say a few words about Pathfinder Press itself, which may be new to some of you here today. We like to say that Pathfinder was born with the October Revolution, because that is when our forerunners began publishing the speeches and writings by Lenin and others who led the first socialist revolution and remained true to its proletarian internationalist course. For 85 years we have had one single objective, to publish and distribute as broadly as

possible the books, pamphlets, and magazines necessary to advance the struggle for national liberation and socialism.

Along this road, we strive to allow revolutionary leaders the world over to speak for themselves, in their own name. And these words by Sankara are a fine expression of the line of march we work to advance.

It seems particularly appropriate to be presenting this Spanish edition here in Cuba, where so many hundreds of thousands of compañeros and compañeras have such deep and lasting ties to the struggles of the people of Africa. As Sankara said, Cuba sets an example "of courage, determination, and the constant involvement of the people" for Africa and the world.

We would like to express our appreciation to our brothers and sisters of Tricontinental for making this joint presentation possible and look forward to more such opportunities in the future.

Books for Cuba Fund

Militant readers are encouraged to contribute to the Books for Cuba Fund, which helps make it possible for Pathfinder books to reach working people and youth in Cuba.

Like their brothers and sisters around the world, Cuban working people find the titles published by Pathfinder to be effective revolutionary political weapons, including in the defense of the Cuban Revolution.

Through the fund, Pathfinder is able to send books and pamphlets to Cuban organizations and institutions that request them. During book fairs, the titles are made available to Cubans in pesos, at prices they can afford.

Among other initiatives, the fund also makes it possible to respond to the political interest in the books in Cuba with special donations to libraries and other cultural institutions.

Contributions, large or small, are welcome. Please send checks or money orders made out to the *Militant* and earmarked "Books for Cuba Fund" to the *Militant*, 410 West Street, New York, NY 10014.



Militant/Linda Joyce

Pathfinder stall at this year's book fair attracted lively discussion.

Book fair celebrates two titles on women's liberation



Militant/Linda Joyce

Nearly 60 people attended the February 13 celebration of two new titles

Continued from front page

opened the meeting and chaired it.

Nearly 60 people attended the February 13 book presentation. Among those present were half a dozen women from Nigeria, Benin, Kenya, and Mozambique, members of the Association of African Women in Cuba, a group of women from African countries on diplomatic assignment in Cuba. A good number of young people participated in the event, both Cubans as well as youth from Angola and several Latin American nations who are studying in Cuba.

"Women in Africa, as throughout the Third World, face oppression and exploitation, a consequence of the legacy of colonialism and the result of capitalism," said Ulises Estrada. He added that "many Cu-

bans have lived in Africa and we have seen some of the painful conditions faced by women there. But we have also seen how African women have fought for their emancipation and have been advancing their participation in society."

In the early 1960s Estrada, assigned to the Technical Vice-Ministry of Cuba's Ministry of the Interior, was responsible for helping train members of the advance team of Cuban revolutionary fighters who went to Bolivia to prepare the way for the guerrilla front led by Ernesto Che Guevara in that country in 1966-67. In 1965, during preparations for the Bolivia mission, he went to the Congo as part of a leadership team at the time that Guevara was leading a column of Cuban internationalists fighting alongside

Congolese liberation fighters. Today he is the director of *Tricontinental*, the magazine of the Organization of Solidarity with the Peoples of Africa, Asia, and Latin America (OSPAAAL), an international anti-imperialist organization whose headquarters is in Havana.

Afonso, a member of the staff of Mozambique's Center for African Studies, told the audience that in Mozambique, "women fought alongside men for liberation from colonialism." She said the victory against Portuguese colonial rule also pushed forward in a new way the fight for women's equality.

While women in Mozambique have made modest advances over the past decades, they suffer disproportionately the consequences of imperialist domination, Afonso noted. For example, while women represent half the population of Mozambique, they constitute more than two-thirds of those who cannot read or write. "Traditions are elements of our identity," she said, "but we have to eliminate those elements that perpetuate the exploitation of women."

Afonso applauded the example revolutionary Cuba has set by offering more than 3,000 Mozambican youth, since the 1970s, the opportunity to study in Cuba and take those skills back home for the betterment of society. Afonso herself is among those who went to school here.

Estrada introduced Waters, congratulating Pathfinder Press on its long publishing record in accurately presenting the voices of the Cuban Revolution. He hailed Pathfinder's publication of *Women's Liberation and the African Freedom Struggle*, which for the first time makes available in Spanish the words of revolutionary Burkinabè leader Thomas Sankara.

Estrada pointed to the 1983 insurrection

Continued on next page

A visit to two garment plants in Havana

BY HILDUR MAGNÚSDÓTTIR

HAVANA—During a break in the Havana International Book Fair, four socialist workers and Young Socialists from Iceland, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom were able to visit two garment factories here.

The first, called Fábrica de Trajes Antonio Maceo, is in Cerro, an industrial part of Havana. It makes suits, caps, and uniforms for waiters, mainly for the tourist sector—"whatever the market demands," the manager said. It's part of a group of three plants, one of which produces the fabric used at the Fábrica de Trajes Antonio Maceo. They have their own trucks for transporting finished articles.

The conditions in this factory are good. It is spacious, well-ventilated, and equipped with modern machinery purchased a year ago. The workers are proud that the factory is clean and pointed out that consequently

because of this situation. There aren't any layoffs in Cuba in this kind of situation, he explained, nor in the case of technical improvements that are made at the plant. The trade unions won't agree to layoffs, and it is also part of the law and the Cuban constitution.

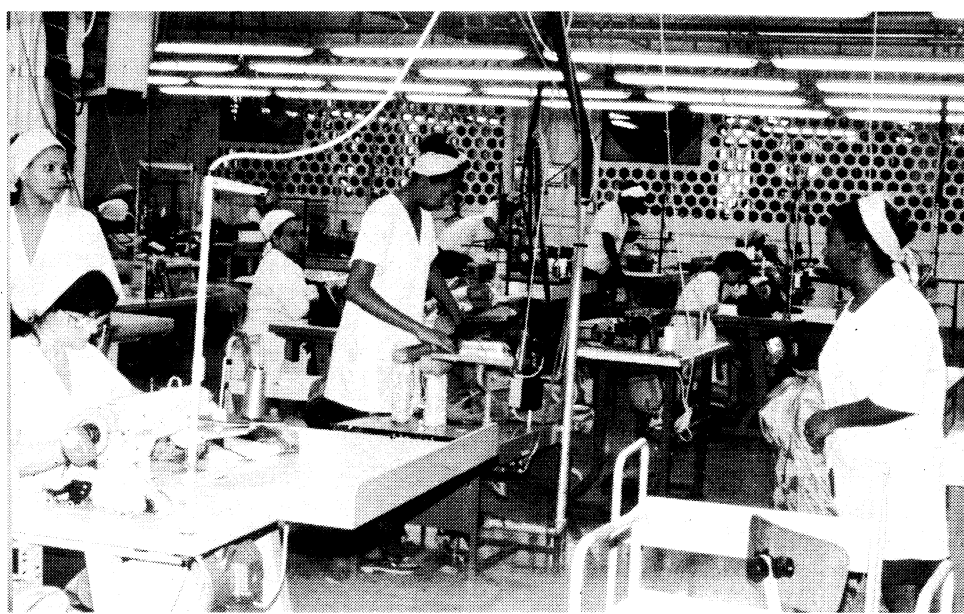
If there is no work for a worker doing a particular job, Alvarez said, plant managers try to find another job for him or her. First they see if there is a job available inside the factory. If not, they look into openings in other plants that are part of the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Light Industry, which, among other things, covers garment factories. If the worker gets less pay in her new job, she is guaranteed at least 80 percent of what she was paid at the other place, for life.

We then had the chance to walk around the plant on our own and talk to a number of workers. We introduced ourselves as reporters for the *Militant* newspaper and the Spanish-language monthly, *Perspectiva Mundial*, as well as fellow workers—garment workers from New Zealand and the United Kingdom, a fishhouse worker from Iceland, and an immigrant worker from Colombia living in the United Kingdom. They were interested to hear about conditions of workers in the imperialist countries—in particular the assaults on workers' rights, the place of immigrant workers, and working-class resistance. We also explained that we are militants in our respective Communist Leagues and Young Socialists, as well as volunteers at the Pathfinder booth at the Havana International Book Fair.

A young sewing machine operator, Miriam Solis, explained that her living standard is quite good. She has worked there for a year and gets 250 pesos every two weeks, plus her hard currency bonus. Her husband, a construction worker, earns about 600 pesos per month and also gets a hard currency bonus. They have no children. Miriam said she always eats in the factory canteen where "the food is good—rice and beans, meat, salad." A meal costs 50 centavos.

Asked if prices have risen over the last year, Miriam replied they had but that this had been more than compensated for by her improved income since working in this plant. She anticipated that her wage would continue to rise.

We talked to a few women who cut away the threads on the inside of clothes. One explained that if a worker at the plant gets



Militant/Róger Calero

Workers in Confecciones Gala garment shop in Havana during visit by international delegation of garment workers and other unionists from the United States.

sick, they don't get paid for the first three days they are off, then they receive 60 percent of their wage. She said that the work hours for most workers in this industry are usually 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, and 7:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on Saturdays. In this factory workers made an agreement that instead of working Saturdays, they would take a shortened, half-hour lunch break Monday to Friday.

We asked her if her wages were sufficient. She said that she was getting by on them; there are difficulties, but it has gotten a little bit better in the last few years.

Voluntary work brigades

Workers at the plant get two weeks vacation twice a year. They organize voluntary brigades to come in some Saturdays for special projects, such as cleaning the machines. There is no overtime, but sometimes workers do voluntary overtime if they are behind in production.

The second worker we talked to was 61 years old and did not plan to retire in the near future. She had been working there since 1974. Before the revolution she couldn't find any job at all. She said that the Special Period had been terrible. That's the name Cubans give to the economic crisis in the 1990s after the collapse in trade and aid from the Soviet Union. During the worst period the factory had closed. The

workers spent two years working at other plants.

The third worker we talked to was Maria Eugenia Aruet. She had been working there for less than a year and is a presser. The workers are all cross-trained, so she does other jobs—although not sewing or cutting—when there is no pressing to be done. She told us that it is not hard to get a job at that factory; you just have to bring your papers and have an interview. The trainees get 150 pesos a month.

When she found out we were volunteers for Pathfinder at the book fair, she said she enjoys reading and was sad she hadn't been able to come to the book fair yet. She said she still was going to try to get there.

She told us that she can speak Russian, and had learned a little English in the "University for All" program. The school is televised and broadcast at 7:00 a.m., 2:00 p.m., and 11:00 p.m. each day. The University for All is scheduled to start teaching Italian soon, which she is planning to study.

The three main victories of the revolution, she told us, are the liberation of women, health care, and education. When we asked her what she thought about the prisoners the U.S. government is holding at its naval base in Guantánamo, she said, "It isn't a problem of the Cubans, but of the Yankees, because the military base is here against the

Continued on Page 12

REPORTERS' NOTEBOOK

they have no mosquito problem, a source of infectious diseases. A doctor and a nurse are on hand to address medical needs of workers at the three plants. The workers are provided with overalls at a nominal charge.

We were met at the factory by a representative of the Central Organization of Cuban Workers (CTC), René Álvarez, deputy general secretary of the Light Industry union. He introduced us to the manager as well as Beatriz Perdoná, the union secretary at Antonio Maceo. They showed us around the plant.

Talking to them we found out that this company was founded 40 years ago and is a 100 percent Cuban enterprise. It currently has a daily turnover of \$10,000. The workers are paid in pesos but get an incentive, or bonus, in "pesos convertibles," a U.S. dollar equivalent. If a worker comes late three times in one month or does badly at his or her job, the worker loses the whole bonus for that month. The average wage is around 210 pesos every two weeks, but there are seven different wage grades: four for cutters and three for machine operators.

They work towards the goal of completing 100 pieces of clothing a day. There is one eight-hour shift, five days a week. The total workforce is 208, the great majority women. The minimum age to work in the factory is 17 years, and, in some cases, 16. The retirement age for women is 55 years and for men 60 years, but retirement is not mandatory. Workers can keep on working.

Alvarez told us that after September 11 tourism to Cuba had declined and the government has been cutting back orders. The plant has had to look for other customers.

We asked if there had been any layoffs

Two titles on Africa launched at book fair

Continued from previous page

that brought to power a popular revolutionary government led by Sankara in the West African country of Burkina Faso, a former French colony.

"Sankara was a truly revolutionary leader in Africa," he emphasized.

From 1983 to 1987, the revolutionary leadership in Burkina began tapping the capacities of peasants and workers to carry through a land reform, take steps to combat hunger, and prioritize education and health care. Sankara was assassinated in a 1987 coup that overthrew the revolutionary government.

"In one of the poorest countries of imperialist-ravaged West Africa, with the highest infant mortality rate in the world, where literacy among women stood at 99 percent," Mary-Alice Waters said, "Sankara confidently unfurled the banner of women's emancipation, presented a scientific, materialist explanation of the social and economic roots of women's oppression within class society, and pledged the support of the National Council of the Revolution to organize and mobilize women to fight to change their conditions of life, and the conditions of life of all" in that country.

"More than a pledge," she continued, "this was a course of revolutionary action that over the next four years set an example not only for all of Africa but also far beyond."

"This small book is not about the fight for women's equality in Africa alone," Waters said. It "belongs to those fighting for human dignity everywhere, including in the most industrially developed countries such as the United States, and the most politically advanced such as Cuba."

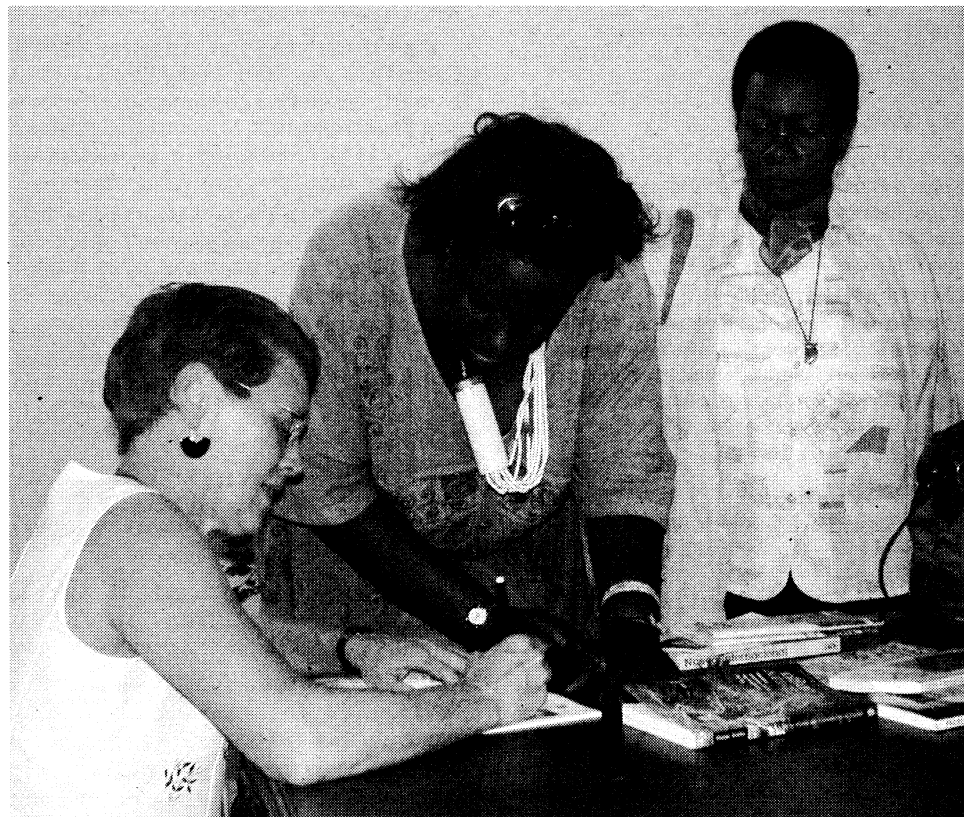
Pathfinder also publishes *Women's Liberation and the African Freedom Struggle* in English and French. Its publication in

Spanish was appreciated by many in the audience who had heard of Sankara before but had not been able to read a translation of his own words.

The English-language edition of the booklet was originally produced a decade ago. Since then, some 7,000 copies of *Women's Liberation and the African Freedom Struggle* have been sold.

After the presentations by Afonso and Waters, dozens of people lined up to purchase copies of both books and get them autographed.

Brian Taylor is a member of United Mine Workers of America Local 2133 in Alabama. Yonatan Mosquera is a member of the Young Socialists in the United Kingdom.



Militant/Linda Joyce

Mary-Alice Waters, president of Pathfinder Press, autographs copies of *Women's Liberation and the African Freedom Struggle* after the February 13 event. Dozens of participants bought copies of both books featured at the celebration.

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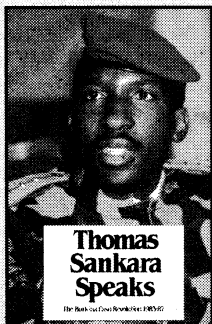
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Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 12, or from pathfinderpress.com.



A visit to two garment shops in Havana

Continued from Page 11
will of the people.”

We also spoke with six cutters, four of whom are women. The machinery is modern, and the techniques, as in other parts of the plant, are identical to those the garment workers from New Zealand and Britain are accustomed to. The wages of the cutters are slightly higher than those of the sewing machine operators and pressers. There is also a cleaning crew.

Zionera Vedo, the secretary of the Communist Party of Cuba at the plant, said that there is a party nucleus there of 21, and a nucleus of six members of the Union of Young Communists (UJC). We asked if workers had discussed in factory assemblies the case of the five Cuban revolutionaries framed up and imprisoned in the United States. She said no, as that was taken care of by the *mesas redondas* (Round Tables, a popular show featuring news and political discussion) and other events outside the factory.

Movement to encourage inventions

There are efficiency assemblies every three months, she told us, but since the CTC congress last year, they've decided on monthly assemblies. These are held "as necessary and when necessary," the union secretary said.

Anton Jimenez is head of the National Association of Innovators and Rationalizers (ANIR), a national movement to encourage inventions and ways to rationalize the work, at the plant. He's a mechanic and has worked in the industry for 34 years, the last five at Antonio Maceo. He told us that there

are 36 *Aniristas* at the plant and said that they have a campaign—part of "*la mujer creadora*" (the creative woman)—to raise the number of women *Aniristas*.

Xiomara Zambrana has worked in the plant since leaving school 20 years ago. We asked if there is a library at Antonio Maceo. "No, but we need one," she said. She then quoted Cuban revolutionary hero José Martí, who said that "to be cultured is to be free."

We took the opportunity to donate the first book for their library—*From the Escambray to the Congo: In the Whirlwind of the Cuban Revolution*, by Victor Dreke—a copy of the *Militant*, a couple of copies of *Perspectiva Mundial*, and a Pathfinder catalog.

We then went to the other factory along with René. It is smaller—it has 89 workers—and makes traditional Cuban clothing. It's called Centro Desarrollo Artesanal "Quitrín" and is located in Obispo, Old Havana.

We were greeted there by Lidia Betancourt, the plant director, and Fernando Hulsá, union secretary. The Federation of Cuban Women (FMC) started this workshop with financial backing from a United Nations agency. Again almost all the workers are women; 11 are male. Fourteen are members of the Cuban Communist Party and two are UJC members.

At this factory there is no production

quota. They said that this is because they want to preserve the quality of the clothes and the traditions in making them. On average, take-home pay is lower at Quitrín than at Antonio Maceo.

The plant has a canteen that opens out to a beautiful Spanish colonial-style garden. Lunch costs 85 centavos.

We talked to some women who teach traditional sewing to a number of home workers linked to Quitrín. Those who work at home do so because of transportation problems. Unlike the other workers at the plant, they get paid for the amount they produce. Most of Quitrín's produce is sold at a shop on Obispo; the plant also sends products to Varadero. It takes around three months to learn each skill.

Workers who take the bus to work told us that at peak hours the bus comes every 10 minutes, and to lower the cost of taking the bus they have developed a transfer ticket system. The workers work from 7:30 a.m. to 3:15 p.m. and take only 15 minutes for lunch. At one of the assemblies the workers decided to cut the breaks so that they could get home earlier due to transportation problems.

Betancourt said that the older generation knew what life was like under capitalism—their parents and grandparents often were peasants. Some of the younger workers had never lived under those conditions, she said. So, during the worst crisis of the Special Period they retreated a bit. But conditions are now better.

We presented this workshop with gifts of the Spanish-language editions of *Cuba and the Coming American Revolution*, and *Pathfinder was Born with the October Revolution*, as well as the *Militant*, *Perspectiva Mundial*, and a Pathfinder catalog.

CUBA and the Coming American Revolution by Jack Barnes

There will be a victorious revolution in the United States before a victorious counterrevolution in Cuba — Fidel Castro, March 1961

Cuba and the Coming American Revolution is about the struggles of working people in the imperialist heartland, the youth who are attracted to them, and the example set by the people of Cuba that revolution is not only necessary—it can be made. Preface by Mary-Alice Waters. **In English, Spanish, and French. \$13.00**

Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 12, or from pathfinderpress.com.

MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

CALIFORNIA

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Celebrate the New Pathfinder Book: *From the Escambray to the Congo—In the Whirlwind of the Cuban Revolution*. Fri. Mar. 1, 7:30 p.m. 4229 S. Central Avenue. Tel: (323) 233-9372.

San Francisco

What the Enron Collapse Reveals about the Crisis of Capitalism. Speaker: Peter Buch, Socialist Workers Party. Fri. Mar. 1, 7:30 p.m.
The Truth Behind the U.S. Invasion of Somalia—and the Continued Resistance to Imperialism's Wars Today. Speaker: Bill Kalman, Socialist Workers Party, meat packer. Fri. Mar. 8, 7:30 p.m. Both events at 3926 Mission St. Donation: \$5. Tel: (415) 584-2135.

NEW JERSEY

Newark

Cuba's Proletarian Internationalism and its Impact in Africa. Speaker: Luis Madrid, Socialist Workers Party, helped to interview Victor Dreke for Pathfinder's *From the Escambray to the Congo: In the Whirlwind of the Cuban Revolution*. Fri. Feb. 22, 7:30 p.m. 506 Springfield Ave., 3rd Floor. Donation: \$4. Tel: (973) 643-3341.

OHIO

Cleveland

Bloody Sunday and the Fight for Irish Freedom Today. Speakers: Neil Garrity, activist in support of Irish freedom struggle; Mike Fitzsimmons, Socialist Workers Party, member, Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees. Sun., Mar. 3, 1:00 p.m. 11018 Lorain Ave. Tel: (216) 688-1190.

NEW YORK

Brooklyn

Behind Bush's 'Axis of Evil' Speech. Speaker: Angel Lariscy, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Feb. 22, 7:30 p.m. 372A 53rd St. (at 4th Ave.) Donation: \$5. Tel: (718) 567-8014.

Garment District

Communism and the Explosion of Popular Resistance in Argentina. An Eyewitness Report. Speaker: Romina Green, participant in recent *Militant* reporting trip to Argentina. Fri., Feb. 22, 7:30 p.m. 545 8th Avenue 14th Floor. Donation: \$4. (212) 695-7358.

Upper Manhattan

Labor Resistance Today: A Speakout. Speakers: A representative of the Flex-O-Tex strikers;

Marino Morel, organizer of Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees; Bill Estrada, Socialist Workers Party and member of United Food and Commercial Workers. Fri., Feb. 22, 7:30 p.m. 599 W. 187th Street, 2nd Floor. Donation: \$5. Tel: (212) 740-4611.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

An Introduction to *From the Escambray to the Congo: In the Whirlwind of the Cuban Revolution*. Speaker: Sam Manuel, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Mar. 2, 7:30 p.m. Dinner at 6:30 p.m. 3437 14th St., NW. Donation: \$4 program, \$5 dinner. Tel: (202) 387-1590.

AUSTRALIA

Sydney

The Truth About the 1993 U.S. Invasion of

Somalia: A Working-Class Answer to *Black Hawk Down*. Speaker: Doug Cooper, Communist League. Sun., Mar. 3, 4:00 p.m. 1st Floor, 3/281-287 Beamish St., Campsie. Donation: \$4. Tel: (02) 9718-9698.

NEW ZEALAND

Auckland

The U.S. Invasion of Somalia in 1993: the Truth Behind the Movie *Black Hawk Down*. Fri., Mar. 1, 7:00 p.m. 7 Mason Ave., Otahuhu. Donation: \$3. Tel: (09) 276-8885.

Christchurch

U.S. Out of the Philippines. Sat., Mar. 2, 7:00 p.m. Gloucester Arcade, 129 Gloucester St. Donation: \$3. Tel: (03) 365-6055.

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AUSTRALIA

Sydney: 1st Flr, 3/281-287 Beamish St.,

Steel bosses seek bailout

Continued from Page 13

dollar bailout for domestic steel producers, Washington's trade representatives, who are attending meetings set up in February by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, are railing against assistance given by governments in other countries to their steel industry. At these talks, an article in the *Financial Times* reported, U.S. officials are proposing that "governments agree in the new round of World Trade Organization talks to eliminate subsidies to the steel industry, putting a major new issue on the WTO agenda."

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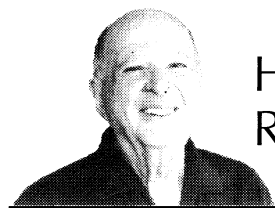
—CALENDAR—

PENNSYLVANIA

Philadelphia

Class series on *From the Escambray to the Congo—In the Whirlwind of the Cuban Revolution* by Victor Dreke. Sponsored by the Young Socialists and the Socialist Workers Party. Wed., Feb. 27, March 6, 13. 5237 N. 5th St. Tel: (215) 324-7020.

Best joke of the week—"Enron excesses may spur salary reforms"—Headline, *Los Angeles Times*.



Harry Ring

It does educate—Lee Todd, who took office as president of the University of Kentucky last summer, was slated to be formally inaugu-

rated February 15. A \$100,000 bash is being funded by private donors.

Further education—Since 1990, tuition and other fees jumped 80 percent at community (two-year) colleges in New York State. A student research project reported that next year the tuition hike could be even greater.

A sturdy lot?—In England, a study indicated, the average student is \$6,300 in debt and 40 percent need to take part-time jobs. Assertively, they spend \$30 a week on alcohol. How they attend classes, study, hold a part-time job, and drink that much, was not explained.

Just breathe shallow—California has a fleet of 24,190 school buses, half of them more than 10 years old. Each of these, in a year, spew out more noxious particulates than 170 cars. The air resources board says not to worry—they're going to start "improving" or replacing them.

Grr, burp—Cops in South Bend, Indiana, are very angry and one detective declared he was sick to his stomach. A lawyer was slated to give a library talk on the rights of those being arrested. The cop with the bellyache assessed the legal rights discussion as antipolice.

Try canceling the debts—A New York-area collection agency has run into a crisis of overexpansion. Its dossier of bad debts has tripled in the past three years and it's now suffering a shortage of collection heavies.

Shades of Plato—For two years, Enron ran a sports media ad: "Sometimes it's the things you don't see that have the biggest impact." The ad has since been iced.

Welfare 'reform'—Since a Montana drive to force families off welfare opened five years ago, only one family in 10 of those affected

have become self-sufficient, even though seven family heads in 10 have jobs. Their average wage is under \$7 an hour and most have no medical insurance. Again, they're forced to turn to welfare.

Defining 'nothing'—In the immediate post-World War II period, ex-GIs listened as politicians declaimed, "Nothing is too good for our boys." Today "nothing" is still the key word. For instance, at the veterans' medical center in Cheyenne, Wyoming, a vet with a routine illness will wait months for an appointment. Meanwhile, case-loads have outpaced budget increases nearly five times.

Steel strikers stand up to union busting in Quebec

BY JOANNE PRITCHARD

VARENNES, Quebec—About 75 people gathered in bitterly cold weather February 7 to demonstrate that the three-month strike against Mométal, a structural steel fabrication plant located 25 miles from Montreal, is alive and well.

The company had caught wind that there was to be an action at 3:00 p.m. and had sent everyone home an hour earlier. "We were discouraged on Monday morning when three strikers decided to cross the picket line but today when we saw the company send people home early, we realized we're still strong," said striker Jorge Barahona.

Mariano Ariete, the president of the local, explained that a union meeting had been organized right after the three had decided to cross to discuss the situation.

The strikers are members of the Metallurgy Federation of the Confederation of National Trade Unions (CSN). After a seven-month strike from October 1999 to May 2000 that defeated company concession demands, the company embarked on a series of provocative attacks. José Barahona's opinion was that Mométal organized to push union members "in order to get rid of the union." They suspended Ariete without pay and then the entire executive committee. Workers then walked out November 6 to defend their union. Mométal subsequently fired the 128 workers who went on



Militant/Yannick Duguay

Unionists on picket line January 21 at Mométal structural steel plant in Quebec. Workers walked out of the plant in November to defend their union. The company subsequently fired the 128 workers who went on strike.

strike.

Despite the Quebec "anti-scab" law, the plant is operating with scabs at greatly reduced capacity. The strike has been declared "illegal" and an injunction prevents effective picketing.

At the demonstration, delegations from other CSN-organized workplaces came to support the strikers. These included representatives of truckers who are fighting to get their union recognized, members of Nova Métal, and workers who have been locked out for three years by an IGA grocery store in St. Hyacinthe. The store recently announced it was officially closing.

France Turcotte explained that of the 49 workers that originally had been locked out, 42 were still doing picket duty. Affirming that the locked-out workers were not dis-

couraged by the closing, she explained, "Maybe we've lost our jobs, but the boss lost his company."

In good spirits and resolved to continue their fight, strikers and their supporters went for a supper organized by the union after the demonstration.

Reflecting the determination of workers, striker Eric Turcotte explained, "Even if I end up working elsewhere, I want to participate in any actions against Mométal."

Joanne Pritchard is a member of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 500.

U.S. steel bosses seek huge bailout and tariffs to restrict steel imports

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

As part of their attempt to forge a tighter and profit-making steel monopoly in the United States, the largest steel trusts are seeking to offload onto the U.S. government what they call the "burden" of pensions and health care for 600,000 retired steelworkers. Industry bosses are also pressing Washington to restrict imports for four years with up to 40 percent tariffs, enabling them to sharply raise prices in the huge domestic market.

The push for imposition of tariffs on steel imports will likely lead to retaliatory trade moves by European steel producers and others. U.S. president George Bush is expected to issue his ruling by March 6.

"The huge burden of retirees faced by most integrated steelmakers has been the biggest obstacle to consolidation in the industry, which is seen as necessary to reduce costs and close uncompetitive steel mills," the *Financial Times* stated bluntly, placing the blame for the state of the capitalists' enterprises on union members.

U.S. government officials announced this week that the cost of such a bailout would be around \$21 billion over the next decade, a figure more than 50 percent higher than that floated by the steel bosses. The United Steelworkers of America estimated that the amount owed by all 38 U.S. integrated steelmakers to their retirees comes closer to \$17.5 billion.

The U.S. Steel Corp. announced in December that it was interested in purchasing some of the other largest integrated steel producers in the country if Washington would take responsibility for the benefits program. Together with U.S. Steel, the six companies involved—LTV, Bethlehem, National, Inland, Wheeling-Pittsburgh, and Weirton—account for about 85 percent of U.S. integrated steel production.

Under contracts signed by the steel com-

panies with the union, these benefits were supposed to be guaranteed for workers who retired after decades of laboring in the steel mills. The idea that the companies were setting aside funds to cover pensions has proved to be a cruel illusion. Even Bethlehem Steel, which recently filed for bankruptcy protection, says it went from having a fully funded pension plan to a \$2 billion shortfall last year because of losses incurred in stock market speculation.

U.S. Steel issued a statement in mid-February stating that it would "probably not go forward" with its plan to consolidate the steel industry if the Bush administration does not impose the full 40 percent tariffs demanded by industry executives.

The proposed merger—which will involve further plant closures, job eliminations, and attacks on union rights—is the steel bosses' response to declining profits and what they describe as a worldwide "overcapacity" of steel production. By some estimates this reaches as high as 200 million tons. In capitalist terms, overcapacity means too much steel is being produced for the steel barons to sell at a profit, not that there is no need for this amount of steel in the world.

Steel prices have been hovering at 20-year lows, while nearly 30 U.S. steel companies have declared bankruptcy over the past four years.

Nucor, the second-largest U.S. steelmaker, also announced that it plans to step up the filing of trade cases to block imports if the import duties are not implemented. "Steelmakers already file far more trade cases than in any other industry," noted a *Wall Street Journal* article. In a further consolidation move, Nucor has put in a bid to buy rival Birmingham Steel's assets.

While considering a record multibillion

Continued on Page 12

—25 AND 50 YEARS AGO—

25 CENTS
THE MILITANT
A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY/PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

March 4, 1977

In a sensational new disclosure of subversion by the CIA, a front-page article in the February 18 *Washington Post* revealed that King Hussein of Jordan has been on the spy agency's payroll for twenty years. The first major spy scandal of the new administration comes less than a month after Carter assumed office, elected on a platform that promised to "halt" abuses by the CIA.

Within a day, the names of more than a dozen other prominent foreign political figures said to be recipients of CIA money were published in the press. These included Willy Brandt of West Germany, Luis Echeverria Alvarez of Mexico, Carlos Andrés Pérez of Venezuela, and Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya.

According to *Washington Post* reporter Bob Woodward, the subsidy to Hussein was one of the most closely held and sensitive of all CIA secret operations. Hussein first received CIA money in 1957, the same year the U.S. Sixth Fleet rushed to his aid to help him survive a coup attempt.

At one point the payments reached \$2 million a year, according to a CIA source cited in the February 19 *New York Daily News*. In 1976 the amount was reduced to \$750,000. Under the code word "No Beef," the money was usually delivered to Hussein in cash by the CIA station chief in Amman.

THE MILITANT
PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE
NEW YORK, N.Y. FIVE (5) CENTS

March 4, 1952

LOS ANGELES, Feb. 22—In a dramatic united outpouring here last night, 5,000 people of all races and creeds massed at the Shrine auditorium to protest the ruthless terror that has swept Florida.

In the largest demonstration in Los Angeles since World War II, the powerful labor movement, Jewish, civic, liberal and religious groups, demonstrated by their presence that the Negroes are not alone in their fight against discrimination and intimidation.

The demonstration was profoundly significant. The meeting was far away in time and distance from the events that called it into being. It was held two months after the bombing murders of the Florida NAACP leader, Harry T. Moore, and his wife, Harriet, which climaxed the floggings, cross-burnings, bombings and murders that have flared unchecked throughout Florida. And Florida is 3,000 miles from Los Angeles.

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People took the initiative. It recognized that the labor movement and other minority groups would share their opposition to the bloody events occurring at the other end of the nation, if only they were informed of what is taking place.

Their appeal for support did not go unanswered.

Coup threat in Venezuela

The capitalist class in Venezuela is accelerating its drive to topple the Hugo Chávez-led government. The rulers are seeking to draw layers of the military, middle class, and trade union bureaucracy into their reactionary campaign. Recent bosses' strikes, statements by a few officers in the military, and pot-banging actions in the streets are all aimed at gaining enough strength to remove the current government.

This drive—possibly somewhat premature and overconfident—could spark a civil war in the country if Chávez and his supporters refuse to heed the demands of the wealthy elite. While opinion polls show popular backing of the government hitting new lows, this is not the same as allowing a reactionary coup—one that would set back the interests of working people—to take place without resistance.

In spite of their hypocritical pretensions of defending democracy, the bosses' real fury is aimed at government measures that begin to address social questions. These include land ownership for peasants—even if modest, taxing oil exports to keep more of the national patrimony in the country, expansion of schooling, and some other measures that address pressing needs of working people.

The wealthy rulers have also railed against Venezuela's

ties with the Cuban Revolution and demanded an end to oil exports to the socialist country at the preferential rates extended to other Caribbean nations. They fear the dangerous example of the Cuban Revolution and that it will infect working people in Venezuela in their fight against the brutalities of the imperialist system.

In their drive against the government, the capitalists will try to take advantage of the worsening economic situation in the country to try to win over layers of working people. In this they have the backing of the bureaucracy of one the main trade union federations in the country, whose leaders have historically backed the capitalist parties.

They dare not say that the devaluation of the national currency, falling national income due to low oil prices, and other pressures on the economy are a result of the unequal terms of trade and dependency forced on semicolonial countries by the imperialist powers.

The effort to replace the government with one that will be more subservient to its imperialist master in Washington and extract more surplus value out of the hides of working people must be rejected. *Militant* readers should denounce these moves by pro-imperialist forces who, in targeting the Chávez government, are taking aim at working people in the country.

Canada actions defend social wage

Tens of thousands of working people in Canada, with teachers, students, and health-care workers in the province of British Columbia in the forefront, are taking action to defend working people's social entitlements and union rights. Their actions merit the solidarity of the labor movement across North America and beyond.

February 23 rallies outside the British Columbia (B.C.) legislature and in a dozen other cities and towns throughout the province are the latest focus of this deepening social resistance. The actions' organizers demand, in the words of the B.C. Federation of Labour's publicity, "jobs, public services, health care, and education." The rallies build on the impact of a range of strikes and protests that have already helped to educate and galvanize broader layers of working people.

These union fighters and youth are responding to a wide-ranging assault on working people's social wage—the public provision of hospitals, schools, and other essential services—by federal and provincial capitalist governments across Canada. The Liberal Party administration in British Columbia has aimed its attacks on the social wage, first and foremost at workers in the schools and hospitals.

In preparation for these assaults, new leg-irons have been placed on workers' right to withdraw their labor. The rulers have reduced the say of the health-care union over severance pay and seniority issues. By declaring education an essential service, the government eliminated the teachers' right to strike last August.

Teachers, students, health-care workers and others have

shown since then, however, that it will take more than a stroke of the pen to force them off the picket lines and out of the streets. In resisting layoffs and budget cutbacks they and many others are acting to defend essential social rights won through historic struggles.

The fight to defend the social wage has broad implications for workers, farmers, and the oppressed. As Jack Barnes writes in *Capitalism's World Disorder* in reference to the U.S. system of Social Security, the "broader historical struggle for Social Security is about whether workers have a *lifetime* right to medical care" and other benefits. The struggle, he says, "is part and parcel of the fight for affirmative action to combat racist and anti-woman discrimination, so we can unite our class and strengthen the labor movement. It is about the fight to ensure jobs for all; to raise the wages and shorten the hours of the working class; and to defend health and safety on and off the job. It is a fight to keep the capitalists from tearing the working class apart."

Capitalism's World Disorder and other Pathfinder titles, including *Cuba and the Coming American Revolution*, place these battles in their historic and international context. Many of the workers and youth who are mobilizing in British Columbia and elsewhere will want to buy and read these political weapons, along with the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*. Through study, discussion, and action they can come to see their struggle and themselves in a different light, as part of the historic fight by working people to overthrow capitalist rule and establish a government of workers and farmers.

Communist movement

Continued from Page 7

it helped put the discussion at the meeting in a different political framework.

Daniel Reed from Omaha came with a co-worker who is a leader of the struggle to organize meat packers to the Des Moines forum. After hearing the forum speakers and returning to Omaha, this worker told others in the plant that she had a lot of new ideas to discuss with them. Reed also reported that a couple of co-workers have started selling Pathfinder books to other workers.

John Perry, a meat packer in New York, told a story about a co-worker who continually raises that the problem with the attacks on September 11 was that his boss remained unscathed. The fellow worker says he would like to join the Taliban in order to take on the boss and address long-held grievances.

Laura Garza from Boston said she has been struck by the number of workers from Latin America who approach the party's literature tables and pick up titles by Lenin right off the bat. She said the branch there has begun to work with a leader of a struggle by janitors in neighboring Cambridge. The union fighter has been encouraging fellow workers to check out the local Pathfinder bookstore and alerting party members to protests they may have otherwise not known about.

Deborah Liatos, from San Francisco, explained that there have been several protests in that city against the U.S. government's deployment of troops to the Philippines. Filipino groups responded quickly to this move by Washington, and a number of those involved have decided to support the fight by Michael Italie as well. These actions are taking place at the same time the largely immigrant workforce at the San Francisco airport, many of whom are Filipino, have been organizing to condemn the new federal

legislation requiring baggage screeners to be U.S. citizens.

An example of the kind of social movements that are developing in areas of the country, Betty Franks, a coal miner in Pennsylvania, pointed to a march being organized by widows of coal miners who contracted black lung. They plan to walk from West Virginia to Washington in April to build support for full funding of the black lung program.

Tasks before every branch

The concrete step decided on by the SWP and YS in New York City is not posed anywhere else in the United States in the foreseeable future, Barnes said in his summary report to the party leadership meeting.

But the strategic course confronting the communist movement in order to meet the opportunities before it is the same.

The party will deepen its work with the Young Socialists around the country to build and recruit to the YS, as worker-bolsheviks advance the construction of a proletarian party more deeply rooted in workers districts, and with trade union fractions in the UFCW, UMW, and UNITE, that are increasingly alert to becoming part of the social resistance of working people.

Rapidly upgrading work by teams of socialists who sell the revolutionary press and Pathfinder literature at factory gates each week is central to this perspective, Barnes said.

Only by making progress along these lines can the party can win our newest members to becoming communists and continue to attract young people from the shop floor to those we meet on workers district tables or on campus to being interested in learning about what it means to be a communist and to join the Young Socialists and the Socialist Workers Party.

Lynching exhibition

Continued from Page 3

"Negro barbecue." The victims were burned at the stake, mutilated, and shot and stabbed repeatedly. Body parts were cut off for souvenirs. Litwack noted that "lynchings and sadistic torture became exclusive public rituals of the South."

He added, "The ordinary modes of execution and punishment no longer satisfied the emotional appetite of the crowd. To kill the victim was not enough; the execution became public theater, a participatory ritual of torture and death, a voyeuristic spectacle prolonged as long as possible (once for seven hours) for the benefit of the crowd." And a lesson for every Black person who saw or heard about it.

"If it is necessary, every Negro in the state will be lynched, declared James Vardaman while he was governor of Mississippi (1904-1908). "It will be done to maintain white supremacy."

The ruling class sought to portray Blacks as subhuman brutes alongside the faithful Sambo retainer. Part of the racist ideology was that the "Black beast" lusted after white women. This was depicted in the movie "Birth of a Nation" in 1915. The film was an important piece of white supremacist ideology. It made Blacks the oppressors and whites the victims. The KKK was glorified as the savior of civilization and "white womanhood." However, Litwack points out that "of the nearly 3,000 blacks known to have been lynched between 1889 and 1918, only 19 percent were accused of rape."

But neither Jim Crow laws nor lynching completely cowed Blacks. By the late 1930s, as African Americans fled the South in search of jobs "up north," and with the rise of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), they gained more confidence to fight back. The independence struggles in Africa and Asia coming out of World War II gathered strength and bolstered this confidence. The March on Washington Movement to end discrimination in the armed forces and defense industries in the 1940s began dealing blows to legalized segregation. The mobilizations and battles of Blacks in the 1950s and '60s from one end of the South to the other battered down Jim Crow. Legal segregation was overthrown and lynchings became seen as an outrage by the overwhelming majority of working people and others in the United States.

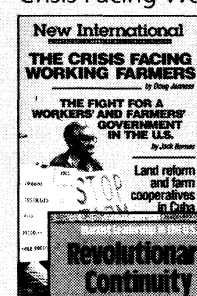
Although the use of lynchings against those displayed in "Without Sanctuary" has been pushed back, violence against the oppressed in this country—including executions on the streets—is still meted out by the courts, cops, and employers. The question today is what strategy do we need to eliminate the lynching system, that is, capitalism, and open the way for the development of the full potential of Blacks and working people in general. Today the objective conditions exist for alliances between workers and farmers. Black workers are part of the working-class vanguard that will transform the unions into fighting instruments of struggle, lead the battles of Blacks against racial oppression, and build a proletarian party capable of leading workers in revolutionary struggle to take power out of the hands of the capitalists. For the first time the road will be opened to fight to transform social relations and build a society that is free of racism and is based on human needs and not profits.

"Without Sanctuary" will next be shown in Atlanta beginning May 1, 2002. The venue will be the Martin Luther King National Historic Site on Auburn Avenue. We encourage everyone to see it.

Further reading from Pathfinder

In New International no. 4

- The Fight for a Workers and Farmers Government in the United States by Jack Barnes • The Crisis Facing Working Farmers by Doug Jenness



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Role of Marxism in fight for women's liberation

Printed below is an excerpt from *Feminism and the Marxist Movement* by Mary-Alice Waters. This is one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for February. The pamphlet is based on a speech by the author presented at the Socialist Activists and Educational Conference held in Oberlin, Ohio, in August 1972. Copyright © 1972 by Pathfinder Press, reprinted by permission. Subheadings are by the *Militant*.

BY MARY-ALICE WATERS

I want to begin by stating what I consider to be the most important generalization we must draw from the record of revolutionary Marxism in relation to the struggle against the oppression of women. It is this: From the inception of the Marxist movement to today, for nearly 125 years, revolutionary Marxists have waged an unremitting struggle within the broad working-class movement in order to establish a revolutionary attitude toward the struggle for women's liberation. They have fought to place it on a sound historical and materialist basis; and to educate the entire vanguard of the work-

banner of socialism, or who supported it in words but refused to fight for it in practice.

This is very important. Our opponents often try to saddle us with responsibility for the positions taken, not by the revolutionaries within the working-class movement, but by the reformists—by the right wing of the pre-World War I American Socialist Party, by the Stalinists, or else by the sectarians and ultralefts who refused to recognize the complexity of the class struggle or the need to fight for democratic rights. But those tendencies do not represent *our* tradition. It is precisely against such forces that revolutionary Marxists have battled over the decades.

The first dividing line came as early as the founding of the Marxist movement itself. The *Communist Manifesto* in 1848 boldly proclaimed:

"On what foundation is the present family, the bourgeois family, based? On capital, on private gain.... The bourgeois sees in his wife a mere instrument of production. He hears that the instruments of production are to be exploited in common, and, naturally, can come to no other conclusion than that the lot of being common to all will likewise fall to the women.

"He has not even a suspicion that the real point aimed at is to do away with the status of women as mere instruments of production."

A scientific materialist foundation

The line of division established here and in all the subsequent writings of Marx and Engels on this subject was that between utopian and scientific socialism. The pre-Marxian utopian socialists—such as Fourier and Owen—were also fervent champions of the emancipation of women. But their socialism, as well as their theories on the family and women, rested on moral principles and abstract desires—not on an understanding of the laws of history and the class struggle rooted in the growth of humanity's productive capacities. Marxism for the first time provided a scientific materialist foundation, not only for socialism but also for women's liberation. It laid bare the roots of women's oppression, its relationship to a system of production based on pri-



Supporters of a woman's right to choose abortion rally in Trenton, New Jersey, in June 1999 to protest a parental-notification bill. The struggle for women's liberation is a "social task in the interests of all humanity," wrote Waters.

vate property and a society divided between a class that owned the wealth and a class that produced it. Marxism explained the *role* of the family within class society, and the *function* of the family in perpetuating the oppression of women.

More than that, Marxism pointed out the road to achieving women's liberation. It explained how the abolition of private property would provide a material basis for transferring to society as a whole all those onerous social responsibilities today borne by the individual family—the care of the old and sick; the feeding, clothing, and educating of the young. Relieved of these burdens, Marx pointed out, the masses of women would be able to break the bonds of domestic servitude, they would be able to exercise their full capacities as creative and productive—not just reproductive—members of society. Freed from the economic compulsion on which it necessarily rests, the bourgeois family would disappear. Human relationships themselves would be transformed into free relations of free people.

And finally, Marxism took socialism and women's liberation out of the sphere of uto-

pian yearning by proving that capitalism itself produces a force—the working class—strong enough to destroy it, capable of carrying through the momentous task of abolishing the tyranny of the possessing few over the overwhelming majority of humankind. For the first time, socialists could stop wishing for the new and better society and begin to organize to bring it about.

The struggle for women's liberation was thus lifted out of the realm of the personal, the "impossible dream," and unbreakably linked to the victory of the progressive forces of our epoch. It became a social task in the interests of all humanity. Thus, Marxism provided a materialist analysis and a scientific perspective for women's liberation.

Those women...who charge that Marxism does not have an adequate place in its theory for women are being dishonest. It is not the degree of adequacy in Marxism's theory that they really question. They fundamentally disagree with its materialist analysis of women's oppression and all that flows from it, including the need for a revolutionary Marxist party to lead the working class and its allies to power.

LETTERS

Censorship in prison

I'm writing you to request help in the fight against the censorship in this prison. On January 18 a staff member removed numerous periodicals from the leisure library that were donated by the inmates. All of these had come through the censors in the mailroom and were regularly requested publications. I have started an appeal process but so far no action to stop this censorship has taken place, and nothing will happen without some outside help. Please urge this censorship be ended by writing: R.L. Morrison, Warden, and Philip Geistfeld, Education Supervisor, c/o FCI Elkton, P.O. Box 89, Elkton, Ohio 44415.

A prisoner
Lisbon, Ohio

Rally in Israel

Buried among the news briefs in the February 10 *Haaretz* was the following item: "About 10,000 demonstrators rallied for a pro-peace protest last night in Tel Aviv. The protesters marched under the slogan, 'The occupation is killing us.' They included veteran Jewish and Arab activists, writers, academics, and artists. Also present were members for the group of Israeli Defense Forces reservists who refuse to serve in the territories. Protesters carried signs saying: 'The occupation is terror,' 'We don't want to die in the next war,' and 'Enough of this government of occupation and killing.'"

Kathleen Denny
San Francisco, California

Robert F. Williams

Radio Free Dixie—Robert F. Williams & The Roots of Black Power, by Timothy B. Tyson, is a book well worth reading. Williams was born in Monroe, North Carolina, in 1925 and witnessed the systematic and brutal discrimination which took place throughout his life.

Williams used the skills he learned in the military to organize defense of the African American community against Ku Klux Klan attacks in Monroe. Although the Black community had used arms to defend itself since the Civil War, Monroe became the most famous place where the Klan became afraid of carrying out their nightly terrorist raids.

Williams was the president of the Monroe chapter of the NAACP, but his advocacy for armed self defense put him at odds with the officials of that organization. Although Williams was suspended by the NAACP, his tactics had a clear effect on the African American community in Monroe.

Robert F. Williams was one of the first African Americans to visit Cuba and went on a national tour for the Fair Play for Cuba Committee. After he was framed up on charges of kidnapping, Williams lived in Cuba and broadcast his program *Radio Free Dixie* which reached an audience spreading throughout North America. Williams also spoke to Ho Chi Minh in Vietnam and lived in China.

Steven Halpern
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Abortion rights action

Some 400 spirited supporters of women's right to choose abortion demonstrated in front of the Supreme Court January 22, the 29th anniversary of the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision decriminalizing abortion.

Earlier in the day, opponents of women's right to abortion held their annual rally and march to protest the *Roe v. Wade* decision. The tens of thousands, including many students bused in by their private religious schools and churches, were encouraged by President Bush, who addressed them from West Virginia by a live telephone hookup.

On January 19, supporters of abortion rights defending several Washington-area clinics far outnumbered rightists who did not even get close to shutting the clinics down as they hoped.

Lea Sherman
Washington, D.C.

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of interest to working people. Letters can be submitted at themilitant.com, sent to themilitant@compuserve.com, or to 410 West St., New York, NY 10014.

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.

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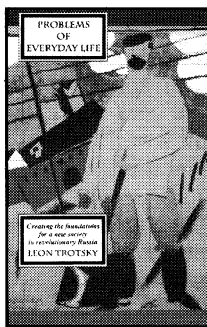
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Rally in Australia denounces brutality against immigrants

BY ALASDAIR MACDONALD
AND JOANNE POULSEN

CANBERRA, Australia—Some 2,000 people rallied here at the opening of federal parliament February 12 to demand an end to the Australian government's brutal policy of imprisoning in detention camps all immigrants seeking asylum. The national protest included participants from across the country with the majority coming from New South Wales and Victoria.

The protest was one more signal that resistance to the treatment of refugees by Prime Minister John Howard's conservative government is growing. Working people and others who have been locked up in inhuman conditions in these camps have staged protests, including hunger strikes, to force a change in government policy. With this courageous stand they have begun to force debate in the opposition Australian Labour Party (ALP) over the government's intransigent stance and, to a lesser degree, in the ruling Liberal Party.

They have also gained support within broader layers of the working class and from defenders of democratic rights. On February 2, for example, thousands rallied in Perth, Sydney, and Melbourne to oppose the mandatory detentions.

To welcome the crowd to Aboriginal land, a delegation from the Aboriginal Tent Embassy marched to the platform holding high their land rights flags. In her welcome, Wadjularbinna, an Aboriginal elder, said that everyone at the rally was "standing on Aboriginal land. Racism did not start with the refugees" but with the British settler invasion in 1788. "I understand the plight of refugees. I've been there myself," she said. "We are refugees in our own land, put in compounds surrounded by barbed wire. My law and my land would not allow this treatment of refugees if we were in charge."

'Free all asylum seekers'

Refugees from Afghanistan and Iraq addressed the crowd. Ahmad Reze Wakil, who fled Afghanistan in 1999, explained that he has become active in the Free the Refugee Campaign in Sydney after spending nine months in the Curtin detention center in Western Australia. Ahmad rebutted the Howard government's claim that it is now safe to return to Afghanistan—the pretext used in the suspension of the processing of Afghan refugees' applications for asylum that sparked the January hunger strike at the Woomera detention center.

"The problem in Afghanistan was not only due to the Taliban," he said. "The new ruling group put in power by U.S. intervention has a brutal history. They are war criminals from the Mujahadeen government in power before the Taliban. We cannot rest until all asylum seekers and refugees are freed."

Speakers addressed the rally from a variety of groups, including Amnesty International; Rural Australians for Refugees; the Federation of Ethnic Community Councils of Australia; Free the Refugee Campaign; Refugee Action Campaign; and the United Nations Association of Australia.

Rural Australians for Refugees gathered under a banner that read, "Put yourself in their shoes. When you know the facts you will open your heart." Groups held hand-made signs from more than half a dozen country towns, mainly in New South Wales.

The scattered banners carried by unionists included the Australian Manufacturing Workers Union; New South Wales Teachers Federation; Australian Education Union; and the Trades and Labour Council of the ACT (Australian Capital Territory).

"Human rights are not a popularity con-

test," said Sharon Burrow, president of the Australian Council of Trade Unions. "No other nation locks up asylum seekers like Australia does. No other nation raids ships at sea to enforce domestic policy. The unions oppose mandatory detention and oppose the so-called Pacific solution."

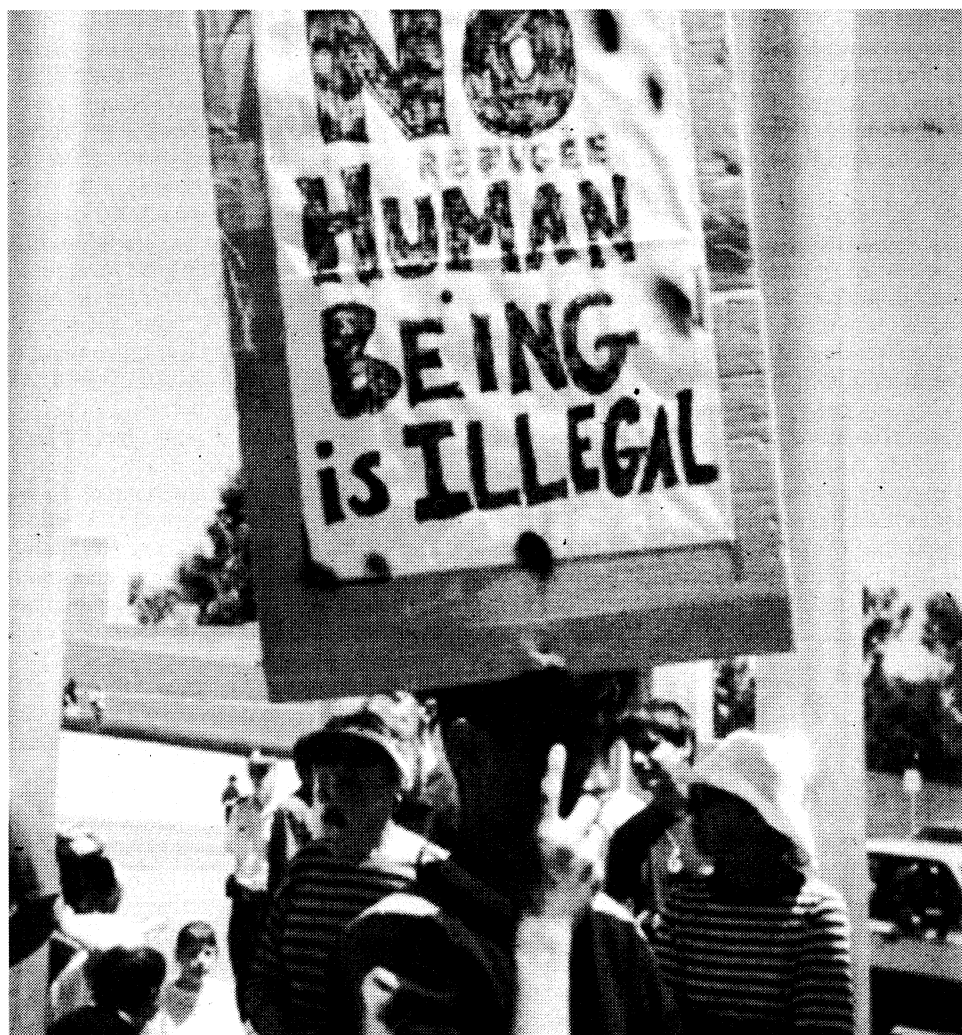
Issue is at center of politics

The issue of mandatory detention of asylum seekers has been at the center of politics here for the past six months since the Norwegian merchant vessel *Tampa* was refused permission to dock on Australian territory after rescuing 438 refugees from a sinking boat.

Canberra sent 50 troops from the Special Air Services unit of the Australian armed forces to board the *Tampa* August 29. After this military show of force and a weeklong standoff, the Australian government transported the majority of the asylum seekers to the Pacific Island nation of Nauru, with 150 sent to New Zealand. The "Pacific solution" refers to the Howard government's plan to send boat people intercepted at sea to refugee camps now set up in Papua New Guinea and Nauru.

The federal election last November centered around the refugee issue, with both the incumbent Liberal-National party coalition government and the opposition ALP calling for tougher border protection and maintaining mandatory detention of refugees.

At the rally, speakers from the Australian Democrats, the Greens, and the ALP all condemned the policy, which currently sees thousands of refugees imprisoned behind razor-wire fences at detention centers in remote places. The dozen Labour MPs who attended the rally included Carmen Lawrence, Duncan Kerr, and other prominent politicians.



Some 2,000 people protested in Canberra February 12 to demand the Australian government end its policy of throwing immigrants seeking asylum into detention camps.

Within the ALP, divisions over refugee policy following the federal elections are increasingly visible. Tanya Plibersek, an ALP Member of Parliament from Sydney, spoke at the rally representing the newly formed Labour for Refugees which has gathered support in a number of party branches.

A message was sent to the rally by Greg Barns, a former senior ministerial staff person in the Howard government, whose endorsement as a candidate by the Tasmanian Liberal Party has been withdrawn because of his criticism of the government's refugee policy. He called mandatory detention "inexcusable" and accused the government of "using desperate people for its own po-

litical purposes."

The crowd included a number of high school students who took the day off to participate. Brendan McGloin, who is 18 and attends Canberra College, was there with three friends. He said that he had handed out leaflets at school for a few weeks because "I'm appalled at the government's policy. It makes me ashamed to be Australian." Sarah, who came with two classmates from a high school in the Blue Mountains, said, "This is an important day to show support. More people in Australia support refugees than people realize."

Alasdair Macdonald is a member of the Young Socialists in Sydney.

Farmers in South press fight for land

BY KARL BUTTS
AND BILL ARTH

ALBANY, Georgia—The Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund's 19th annual Trade Show Conference drew dozens of farmers and their families. They came from Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, and South Carolina, swelling attendance on the second day of the conference to more than 200.

Most came to hear an update on *Pigford v. Glickman*, the lawsuit by farmers against the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) for discriminatory practices. During the February 8-9 conference, claimants in the suit also had an opportunity for individual meetings with representatives of the office of the court-appointed monitor, established to oversee the implementation of the consent decree that settled the lawsuit.

There were conference sessions on the outlook for the peanut crop, on alternative marketing strategies for farmers, and speeches by various politicians, mainly on the 2002 Farm Bill. In various ways, all reflected the continuing crisis facing working farmers today.

A standing-room only crowd filled the room to hear a report from the monitor's office. Many expressed frustration with the slow pace of the settlement, the number of claims that have been turned down, and continued discrimination at the hands of local USDA field representatives.

The monitor is responsible for, among other things, reviewing at least 6,000 appeals by farmers whose claims to qualify under the terms of the settlement have been rejected by a federal adjudicator. Nearly 40

percent of the original claims have been thrown out.

Stephen Carpenter, senior counsel for the monitor's office, admitted that "most petitions haven't been decided yet." He reported that only 600 claims have been sent back to the federal adjudicator for reconsideration.

Under a court order, farmers who missed the initial deadline set out in the consent decree to file a claim were able to submit evidence as to the discrimination they faced as well as the "extraordinary circumstances" necessitating a late filing.

More than 60,000 farmers submitted late claims to the office of the arbitrator, Michael Lewis, who will determine if the required proof is sufficient.

According to Carpenter, Lewis's office has "said yes to a few while saying no to a lot." In reference to the latter category, John Zipper, Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund staff person, asked, "Why does Lewis's office send out mass mailings of late-claim rejections? They make it hard for farmer advocates to assist the many farmers who all at once need help in submitting appeals within the 60-day limit."

At the meeting Carpenter admitted nothing has been done to address the racist practices at the USDA. He urged farmers with successful claims to take advantage of the consent decree's injunctive relief entitling them to one-time priority consideration in application for a new loan. "The people in Washington believe you are not interested in injunctive relief," Carpenter said, because so few have requested it so far.

Sanford Bishop, a Georgia member of

Congress, pointed out that "the county committees are [still] not accountable to the secretary of agriculture and no restructuring of the USDA has occurred to prevent discrimination."

One elderly Black farmer caught the sentiments of the crowd at the end of the monitor's report when he said: "I just wonder if the playing field is going to be level when my grandchildren come along. Where is the justice? I hope the day will come when America will get its priorities straight." His remarks drew applause from the audience. Since 1960, the amount of land owned by Black farmers in the South has been reduced by 80 percent.

Arthur Newsom, who grows vegetables on a 40-acre farm in Prentiss, Mississippi, that has been owned by his family for more than 150 years, described his experience to the *Militant*. He said he filed a claim in 1999, which was rejected. "They never gave a good reason why it was denied in the first place," he said. He filed an appeal, and since has waited for a response.

Newsom said word of what is happening "needs to be spread around, to see if it will help the situation and get things going. The farmer is due what he can get to help him farm. They're not giving anything to us." He pointed out that the Minneapolis law firm representing the monitor's office is "1,200 miles from us and the only way you can get to them is by phone."

Karl Butts is a farmer from Plant City, Florida. Bill Arth is a meat packer and member of the United Food and Commercial Workers union in Atlanta.