

THE MILITANT

SPECIAL FEATURE

Cuba: 'A practical example of how to fight, win, and defend gains'

Speakers discuss 'Our History Is Still Being Written'

—PAGES 8-11

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VOL. 70/NO. 45 NOVEMBER 27, 2006

Palestinians in Gaza Strip protest killings by Tel Aviv

BY SAM MANUEL

WASHINGTON—Tens of thousands of Palestinians marched November 9 in a mass funeral procession for 18 people killed in an artillery barrage by the Israeli military on the town of Beit Hanoun the previous day. Thousands also demonstrated the same day in capitals across the Middle East.

Israeli prime minister Ehud Olmert responded saying he “regretted” the loss of life, but he dismissed the killings as the consequence of a “technical” failure in the Israeli military’s response to rockets fired at Israel from the Gaza Strip. Olmert also warned that Tel Aviv would continue to target Gaza in response to such attacks.

On November 11, Washington vetoed a resolution proposed by Qatar at a session of the United Nations Security Council condemning the Israeli attack, despite the agreement of diplomats from largely Arab countries to substantially weaken the wording.

On November 8, early in the morning, artillery shells fired from Israeli tanks struck several homes in Beit Hanoun, killing 18 Palestinian civilians as they slept. All of those killed were members of a prominent family

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‘Books liberate’ is theme of 2006 int’l book fair in Venezuela

BY RÓGER CALERO

CARACAS, Venezuela—“Books Liberate” is the theme of the Second Venezuela International Book Fair, which opened here November 9. Held at the popular Parque del Este (Eastern Park), the fair is easily accessible by subway and other public transportation. During the first four days of the 11-day event, tens of thousands of people have browsed through exhibits by publishers from 35 countries, a substantially larger turnout than last year.

After the fair closes here in Caracas November 19, it will travel for the first time ever to each of the country’s 23 states, including those in the Amazon and other remote regions.

“Our starting point is our conviction that reading and writing are social activities,” said Ramón Medero, president of the National Book Center (CENAL), at the opening ceremony. CENAL is the government institution responsible for promoting and distributing literature.

“We are rescuing books from the mediocrity to which they had been subjected,” said Medero. “With books we want to awaken the con-

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Strikers at Goodyear firm in fight against takebacks

‘We’re fighting for every union,’ workers say

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS AND DAVID FERGUSON

GADSDEN, Alabama—“The way I see it we’re out here fighting for every union,” said Eddie Elkins, a striker on the picket line at the Goodyear Tire plant here. “Other companies are taking a look at what they’re doing to us to see what they can do to their workers.”

Some 15,000 workers at 16 Goodyear plants in the United States and Canada, members of the United Steelworkers union (USW), have been on strike since October 5 against company efforts to cut wages by up to 40 percent, eliminate retiree medical benefits, and close plants.

Negotiations between the two sides resumed November 14 for the first time since the strike began. The USW reported in its “Solidarity Alert” that day that Goodyear insisted on its de-



Militant/Jeanne Fitzmaurice

United Steelworkers members on strike against Goodyear picket Gadsden, Alabama, plant October 8.

mand to slash its financial obligation to retirees’ health care plan by \$500 million, which the union rejected.

Elkins, a member of USW Local 12L with 33 years at the Gadsden factory, said the company had started bringing

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Deadly U.S.-backed missile strike inside Pakistan sparks protests

BY SAM MANUEL

Thousands of people protested in several Pakistani cities October 31 against a missile attack on a religious school that killed 80 people the previous day in the village of Chingai, near the border with Afghanistan. At the rally prominent Islamic clerics blamed the Pakistani military and Washington for the attack.

The government led by Gen. Pervez Musharraf has been under intense U.S. pressure to crack down on Pakistan-based forces, allied with the Taliban,

that have been stepping up attacks inside neighboring Afghanistan.

In the border town of Khar some 10,000 people, many of them supporters of Islamist groups, protested the attack on the school. Similar protests took place in Karachi, Peshawar, and other cities nationwide.

Many local legislators and cabinet ministers in the regional government resigned in protest over the attack, increasing the difficulties for Musharraf, who has been seeking to win support in

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Getty Images

Residents of village of Chingai, Pakistan, at religious school destroyed October 30 in air attack that killed 80 people. The Pakistani military claimed responsibility.

Meeting at UCLA discusses book on Cuban Revolution

BY NAOMI CRAINE AND DAVID ARGÜELLO

LOS ANGELES—During the 1960s and ’70s, among Asian American students like himself, said Russell Leong, editor of the *Amerasia Journal*, “a lot of us focused on the socialist revolution in China and also in Vietnam. We didn’t know much about Cuba, and nothing about the involvement of Chinese in the Cuban Revolution.”

Leong was chairing a presentation here November 8 of *Our History Is Still Being Written: The Story of Three Chinese-Cuban Generals in the Cuban Revolution* at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA).

Recommending that professors adopt the book for their classes, Leong noted that “you can hear what those who have been involved in the Cuban Revolution have to say about it, and also have to say about the future.”

Leong thanked the sponsors of the meeting, which included several at UCLA: the Asian Pacific Coalition (APC), Asians in the Americas Working Group, *Amerasia Journal*, Department of Asian American Studies, Asian American Studies Center, and Latin American Center. Also sponsoring were the Southern California Library for Social Studies and Research and the Filipino group Bayan of Southern California.

Among the more than 100 people attending were more than 20 UCLA students, members of sponsoring campus groups, activists in solidarity

with Cuba, members of the Chinese Historical Society of Southern California (CHSSC), and Filipino and Korean activists.

Jason Osajima, director of the APC, opened the meeting, noting that the coalition includes more than 20 Asian and Pacific Island student groups at UCLA. Also speaking were Eugene Moy, vice president of programs of the CHSSC; Clara Chu, professor in the departments of Information Studies and Asian American Studies who chairs the Asians in the Americas Working Group; Nobuko Miyamoto, founder and artistic director of the Asian American cultural group Great Leap; and Mary-Alice Waters, president of Pathfinder Press and editor of *Our History Is Still Being Written*.

Ojima said the APC has been in-

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UN vote condemns U.S. embargo against Cuba

BY SAM MANUEL

UNITED NATIONS, November 8—For the 15th consecutive year the United Nations General Assembly approved a resolution by a wide margin calling on the U.S. government to end its 47-year-long trade embargo against Cuba. The nonbinding resolution was supported by 183 governments. Only four—the representatives of the United States, Marshall Islands, Palau, and Israel voted against—and Micronesia abstained.

A last-minute amendment proposed by the Australian government to add a paragraph calling on Havana to unconditionally release all so-called political prisoners and respect human rights was soundly defeated with 127 governments voting against, 50 in favor, and 5 abstentions. The Australian representative argued that the U.S. embargo was motivated by “valid concerns” about freedom in Cuba.

“Cuba will never surrender to this illegal and immoral blockade,” said Cuban foreign minister Felipe Pérez Roque to thunderous applause.

“Nor will Cuba retreat from its commitment to extend aid and solidarity to those suffering exploitation around the world,” said Pérez Roque. He was referring to a new restriction under the U.S. embargo that prohibits the sale to Cuba of medical equipment that can be used in large-scale health-care programs in other countries. Tens of thousands of Cuban doctors are providing medical care in some of the most remote parts of Latin America and Africa.

Several African diplomats took sharp exception in their remarks to this new restriction imposed by Wash-

ington.

“Such a measure would have a deplorable effect in many African villages where the only doctor is a Cuban doctor,” said Kaire M. Mbuende, Namibia’s UN representative. He told of being treated himself by Cuban doctors in a refugee camp in Tanzania prior to Namibia’s independence in 1990.

Washington’s delegate objected that the U.S. embargo was a “bilateral issue” and should not be discussed by the UN General Assembly.

In preparation for this year’s discussion, the Cuban government released its written response to a request from the UN secretary general on the effects of the embargo at a October 24 press conference in Washington. The report, titled “Necessity of Ending the Economic, Commercial and Financial Blockade Imposed by the United States of America Against Cuba,” is available at the UN web site, www.un.org. Drawing on that report, Pérez Roque detailed Washington’s tightening of the embargo and travel restrictions over the last year.

In 2005, Pérez Roque said, the U.S. Treasury Department, which enforces the embargo, fined 38 companies and banks a total of more than \$44,000. It also issued fines to 487 U.S. citizens or residents totaling nearly \$530,000 for violating the travel ban. Family visits between Cubans in the United States and the island have been reduced from 115,000 in 2003 to 62,000 last year.

Washington has intensified its efforts to block the sale of Cuban nickel—an important source of hard currency for



Granma/Arnaldo Santos

More than 1 million Cubans marched past the U.S. Interests Section in Havana in January to protest Washington’s unending hostilities against the Cuban Revolution.

that country. The U.S. government has also stepped up pressure on foreign banks doing business with Cuba. In one example cited in Cuba’s report, a Uruguayan bank with central offices in the United States was forced to close the accounts of a bank in Argentina because the Argentine bank’s president was registered on a U.S. Treasury Department list due to his long-standing commercial links to Cuba.

At the October 24 press conference, Dagoberto Rodríguez, chief of the Cuban Interests Section in Washington, said the U.S. embargo cost the Cuban economy more than \$4 billion in 2005 alone.

Pérez Roque said the amendment submitted by the Australian government was drafted by U.S. officials after having failed to convince the European Union to submit it. “The talking points for this amendment were being distributed by the United States before it was submitted by Australia,” he noted.

For years the governments of Australia and several European countries have voted for ending the U.S. embargo but entered separate statements of explanation for the record, charging Cuba with violating human rights.

The EU backed the Australian amendment but also voted for the Cuban-backed resolution on lifting the embargo, the Finnish delegate stated, because of “extraterritorial” U.S. regulations that penalize companies in other countries.

In response Pérez Roque said the governments of the United States,

Australia, and the European Union had “no moral authority to talk about human rights with the brutal assault and occupation of Iraq, the mistreatment of prisoners at Abu Ghraib and in Guantánamo—including Australian prisoners—the rising racism and xenophobia across Europe faced by people from its former colonies, and the near extermination and apartheid-like conditions imposed on the indigenous people of Australia.”

For further reading

To Speak the Truth Why Washington’s ‘Cold War’ against Cuba Doesn’t End

by Fidel Castro
and Ernesto Che
Guevara



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Reuters/Bob Strong

U.S. and Iraqi troops approach a farmhouse during a “knock and search” mission in Iraq, February 2006.

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Broadly sponsored L.A. event discusses book by Chinese-Cuban generals

Continued from front page
volved along with Black and Latino student groups in protests against moves to undermine affirmative action at UCLA.

“We see the struggles that other communities of color are going through on this campus as ours,” he said. “There is still blatant and implicit racism. And I think those were the type of thoughts the Chinese-Cuban generals were going through during their time in the Cuban revolution.”

Leong added that “one of the great things about this book is that it shows the role students can have in the revolution.”

Growing up in segregated L.A.

Eugene Moy described growing up behind his family’s store in segregated South Central Los Angeles.

Through the work of the Chinese Historical Society, Moy said, “We’ve learned why there were Chinatowns and ghettos.” Referring to the book’s account of the role of Chinese in Cuba, he said he was happy “to have the opportunity to learn more about this aspect of our history” too.

Several other CHSSC members participated in the event, including its president, J.W. Wong.

Nobuko Miyamoto reported that on a 2001 trip to Cuba she met Japanese-Cubans who described the internment of Japanese men by the U.S.-backed Cuban government during World War II. “Similar to the Chinese in Cuba, many of them joined the revolution,” she said. Miyamoto also performed several songs.

Mary-Alice Waters brought greetings from the three Cuban generals interviewed in the book—Armando Choy, Gustavo Chui, and Moisés Sío Wong—with whom she had just participated in a speaking tour in seven cities across Cuba. At those meetings, “Many Cubans were learning about their own history too,” she said.

Like other titles in Pathfinder’s 17-book series on the Cuban Revolution, Waters said, *Our History Is Still Being Written* tells the story of “a generation of young people, students and workers, who refused to bow down to the indignities and brutalities of life under the boot of the U.S.-backed dictatorship.”

This book “is one of the best places

to start to understand the depth and character of the revolution,” Waters said. It offers an effective counter to the reactionary drumbeat by those in the United States calling for a “transition” in Cuba toward capitalism.

Clara Chu focused her remarks on the immigration of Chinese to Latin America. Chinese were brought to Cuba in the mid-19th century as indentured laborers to work the sugar plantations, she said, adding that “Chinese participated in the Cuban wars for independence from Spain.” Chu described the rich artistic and cultural contributions of Chinese-Cubans.

A lively discussion followed the presentations. “Were there connections between the Chinese-Cuban generals and African Cubans?” was the first question.

Waters noted that in the book Chui, whose father was Chinese and mother was Black, describes the prejudice among some relatives toward his mother. “You get a picture of the racial conflicts that did exist,” she said. “And through their stories you see the impact of the Cuban revolution in overcoming such divisions, as different components of the population came together in the course of struggle.”

Another audience member noted that out of a freshman class of 4,852 at UCLA this year, only 96 students are African American. “How does this book relate to the struggle for affirmative action?” she asked.

Moy recalled that the formation of Chinese Historical Society was connected to the effort in the 1960s to win ethnic studies programs at UCLA and other campuses. “We wanted to see



Militant photos by Emily Paul
Above, Eugene Moy of the Chinese Historical Society of Southern California speaks at November 8 meeting at the University of California in Los Angeles. Seated next to him are (left to right) UCLA professor Clara Chu, Pathfinder president Mary-Alice Waters, and Nobuko Miyamoto of the Asian American cultural group Great Leap. Right, part of audience at UCLA.



some measure of justice. The problem is, we’re not there yet,” he said.

What socialist revolution can do

“This book shows what it takes to chart a course of struggle,” said Waters. Racist discrimination exists in the United States not because some people have prejudiced ideas “but because it’s crucial to preserving the capitalist system.”

“The economic foundations of discrimination were eliminated in Cuba with the socialist revolution,” she said. That social transformation made it possible for the revolutionary leadership to attack the vestiges of racism, a process that is ongoing.

A questioner asked about the current cleanup of Havana harbor, contrasting it with the polluted ports in Los Angeles. Waters in her talk had pointed to Choy’s leadership of the cleanup in Cuba.

“Capitalist governments all over the world use the slightest economic downturn as an excuse not to address degradation of the environment,” Waters said. “In Cuba, even under the most difficult economic conditions, the leadership did confront it. This shows the different priorities of a socialist country that doesn’t start with the need to protect profits.”

Nety Con, a member of the CHSSC, told the *Militant* after the meeting that she found the program interesting “because I haven’t known about Chinese in another country fighting with the people and helping with the revolution.”

“What a breath of fresh air to be around people who open their eyes to the world,” said Brent Shepard, a UCLA student. “The Cuban Revolution amazes me, and it’s amazing how it is shunned in this society.”

Israeli tanks bombard Palestinian village

Continued from front page
in the town. Another 54 people were wounded.

The Israeli military said the artillery fire was in response to rockets that had been fired into Israel from an orange grove in the city about 500 yards from the homes.

The attack came shortly after Israeli forces withdrew from a week-long offensive in Gaza in which 52 Palestinians were killed.

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Venezuela, the Cuban Revolution, and the World Today. Speakers: Argiris Malapanis, *Militant* editor; Róger Calero, *Militant* editorial volunteer; Emily Paul, Young Socialists. Fri., Dec. 1. Dinner 7 p.m., program 8 p.m. 306 W. 37th St., 10th Floor (use north set of elevators). Tel.: (212) 629-6649.

NEW ZEALAND
Auckland
Boss Greed Behind Mine Deaths. Screening of *United We Stand*, a video by the Engineering, Printing, and Manufacturing Union. Speaker: representative, Communist League. Fri., Nov. 24, 7 p.m. 7 Mason Ave., Otahuhu (upstairs, above laundromat). Tel.: (09) 276-8885.

Protests against the killings occurred in several Middle Eastern capitals. In Jordan, the Associated Press reported that 1,000 people took to the streets to denounce the Israeli attack. In Sudan 2,000 gathered outside the United Nations mission and burned U.S. and Israeli flags.

In Cairo, Egypt, 3,000 people reportedly gathered at the Al-Azhar Mosque in response to a call by the Muslim Brotherhood. The group also organized another rally in Alexandria that drew 2,000 people. The Brotherhood, while officially illegal, has 88 members of parliament seated as independents. Several of them led the protests.

Just days before departing for Washington to meet with U.S. president George Bush, the Israeli prime minister offered to release “many” Palestinian prisoners in exchange for an Israeli soldier, Gilad Shalit, captured by Hamas last June. Olmert said he would make the deal on the condition that Hamas hand over Shalit to Palestinian president Mahmoud Abbas. Olmert, in turn, would release Palestinian prisoners to Abbas.

“I will not release even one of the prisoners to Hamas,” Olmert said. “But to Abu Mazen [Mahmoud Abbas], I am

ready to release many.”

Hamas, also known as the Islamic Resistance Movement, grew out of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt. Its program, like that of the Brotherhood, calls for the establishment of an Islamic Republic in Palestine. In elections last January it ousted Fatah as the ruling party in the Palestinian Authority. Fatah, led by Yasser Arafat until his death in 2004, had been the ruling party in the Palestinian Authority since its founding in 1994.

In vetoing the Security Council resolution condemning the shelling of Beit Hanoun, U.S. ambassador John Bolton said it was “biased against Israel and politically motivated.”

The original resolution called for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza and a UN observer force to enforce it, according to a Reuters report. In a compromise, diplomats from majority-Arab countries agreed to drop the call for a ceasefire and a UN observer force and instead call on Tel Aviv to immediately end its military operations in Palestinian areas and to pull its troops out of Gaza. It also called on the Palestinian Authority to “take immediate and sustained action to bring and end to violence, including the firing of rockets into Israel.”

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How U.S. imperialist rulers prepare for more wars at home and abroad

Below we reprint excerpts from "Their Transformation and Ours," a 2005 Socialist Workers Party resolution printed in issue 12 of the Marxist magazine *New International*. This selection, together with those from Cuba and the Coming American Revolution by Jack Barnes, also reprinted on this page, reviews the bipartisan course of U.S. imperialism over the last decade and a half as the twin capitalist parties keep shifting to the right in both domestic and foreign policy, a course that continues today.

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As we enter 2005 the employers' offensive, begun in the early 1980s, continues and intensifies. Pressing factory by factory, industry by industry, they have driven down workers' wages, increased differentiation among wage earners, and diluted seniority. The bosses have intensified speedup, extended hours of work, and made pensions and medical care more expensive, less secure, and narrower in coverage. In doing so, they keep weakening the union movement.

At the same time, these "conquests" have not been enough to enable the employing class

- to push labor off center stage of politics in the United States;
- to break the spirit of vanguard workers in packinghouses, sewing shops, mines, and other workplaces where the capitalists have pressed their offensive the farthest for the longest time; or
- to reverse the sea change in working-class politics, marked by renewed rank-and-file resistance to antilabor assaults...

To try to accomplish such goals, the capitalists must slash the social wage wrested from them by working people in the course of class battles beginning in the mid-1930s. These gains culminated in the great advances of the late 1960s and early 1970s: the extension of Social Security benefits, establishment of Medicare and Medicaid, and the addition of escalator clauses protecting retirement, medical, and disability benefits against inflation...

In face of the rulers' mounting financial and economic vulnerability, the political and military challenges they confront worldwide, and the inevitable sharpening of class conflict these conditions entail, America's propertied families and their political representatives in both the Democratic and Republican parties have become increasingly conscious of the need to use both the economic and the military power of U.S. imperialism.

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New International no. 12—\$16

Cuba and the Coming American Revolution
by Jack Barnes—\$13

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Gone is the illusion that the outcome of the Cold War in itself was a victory that would bring global stability under the domination of a Pax Americana, together with a cushion in state finances provided by a permanent "peace dividend." The rulers sense—even if they do not see clearly or understand—the uncontrollable forces carrying them toward a future of sharpening crises, with its intertwined face of depression, war, and increasingly violent class battles with higher and higher stakes.

The frustration born of a vague but growing awareness of this vulnerability, combined with the inability to find a self-confident course to decisively surmount it (there is none), is the single greatest source of the deepening factionalism, demagoguery, and degradation of political discourse—what can accurately be called its "pornographication"—that characterize all bourgeois politics in the United States, not only between but increasingly within the dominant ruling parties and their peripheries.

To prepare to defend their more and more crises-ridden global order, the U.S. rulers, led by Bush, Cheney, and Rumsfeld with broad bipartisan backing, are carrying out the most profound transformation in Washington's military policy, organization, and initiatives in more than half a century. No longer facing down massed Warsaw Pact troops and tank divisions across northern Europe, U.S. imperialism has begun implementing a fundamental shift in the strategy, global deployment, structure, and leadership of its armed forces.



A historic shift in the global deployment of U.S. imperialism's armed forces, its military strategy, and its order of battle is being sharply accelerated. Championed by the White House and pushed forward by the Defense Department, this transformation aims at preparing for the character of the wars the imperialist rulers know they need to fight—at home as well as abroad. No substantial wing of either the Democratic or Republican parties has a strategic alternative to this

Bipartisan assault on rights: from 1990s to today

Reprinted below are excerpts from Cuba and the Coming American Revolution by Jack Barnes. The text is based on talks given by Barnes in March 2001. George W. Bush had recently been inaugurated as U.S. president after eight years of William Clinton's administration. Copyright © 2001 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.



BY JACK BARNES

• With support from both parties in Congress, Clinton signed into law legislation that expanded mandatory prison sentences and increased their length, reduced protections against arbitrary search and seizure by the cops and courts, increased property seizures before trials, and financed a record increase of more murderously armed police on the streets...

• In 1996 Clinton signed into law the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act, adopted by a Republican Congress. That law expands



Militant/Paul Pederson
Above: New York police search passengers' bags at subway entrance, July 2005. Right: light-armored Stryker vehicle used by U.S. military as part of its transformation into a faster, more agile force to deploy around world.

course. And it is already too far advanced to be reversed...

In seeking to accelerate transformation, the U.S. rulers are aggressively working to break through the conservative bias of the imperialist officer caste formed during the Cold War and marked especially by their political experience during the war in Vietnam. This determined push is sparking the most bitter factionalism within the officer corps of the armed forces—and of the intelligence services—since the opening years of the U.S. Civil War in the mid-nineteenth century. Many within the bureaucracies of the Army, Air Force, Navy, Marines, and CIA stand to lose (or win) not only promotions but control over big resources. Never before have so many generals and intelligence officers gotten away with publishing so many politically partisan "tell it like it is" books in so short a period, often within a few months of resigning or retiring from active duty. They line up on one side or another in these turf wars and openly join the factional and electoral struggle for control of the executive and legislative branches of the government...



As U.S. finance capital wages war abroad, it is simultaneously advancing more and more openly on its front at home. Laying the groundwork for stepped-up militarization of civilian life, as needed, is central to their transformation...

The establishment of an armed forces command for the continental United

States is combined with other, more publicized preparations to meet worker and farmer resistance at home. The capitalists deliberately drape these preparations in civilian, not military trappings. Like NORTHCOM, elements of such measures—dubbed "Homeland Defense" since 9/11, and centralized through a new civilian cabinet department of that name—were initiated by the Clinton administration. Avoiding the xenophobic Americanism the rulers will inevitably nurture among layers of the population as conditions of social crisis and broader war require, they present the preparatory steps they need to take today as matters of "civic duty" and as minor intrusions of privacy required of "us all" in face of "terrorists" imperiling hearth and home.

These measures range from increased federal centralization of "surveillance" of "suspected terrorists" both at home and abroad, to a de facto national identity card system in the guise of Social Security numbers; from omnipresent "security" controls at airports, in office buildings, and elsewhere, to appeals to report "suspicious" packages in public places or behavior that's "out of the ordinary" in your apartment building, neighborhood, or on the streets; from curtailment of habeas corpus and even Fifth Amendment protections of the accused and spying on individuals' library use, book purchases, and bank accounts, to stepped-up targeting of foreign-born residents, whether "legals" or "illegals."

the powers of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) to round up and deport those charged with being "illegal" immigrants without the right to judicial review or appeal. Simultaneously the White House and Congress funded the expansion of the hated *la migra* into the largest federal cop agency, one that has stepped up factory raids and deportations to record numbers in recent years...

• Under the Star Chamber provisions of the 1996 Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act, the U.S. government has held some two dozen people without bail in "preventative detention" on the basis of "secret evidence." Most are immigrants from Arab or other majority Muslim countries accused of links with "terrorist organizations"—the code word the U.S. rulers increasingly use to rationalize both assaults on democratic rights at home and military strikes abroad. Altogether some 20,000 people are being held in U.S. jails awaiting the outcome of threatened deportations—a 245 percent increase just in the five years since adop-

tion of the anti-immigrant legislation...

• During his closing days in office Clinton issued a presidential directive establishing a "counterintelligence czar," and Bush just this week made an appointment to the new top-level spy post. According to press accounts, the position is "designed to facilitate a level of cooperation never seen before among the FBI, the CIA and the Pentagon, and will, for the first time, engage the rest of the government and the private sector as well."

I raise the Clinton and Bush administration's new counterintelligence czar not because there is reason to anticipate some tidal wave of repression right around the corner. But the U.S. rulers are already shifting gears from the last decade. They know they will face more and bigger battles as international capitalist competition drives them to slash wages, extend the workday, intensify speedup, cut social security protections, and crush the unions. And they are preparing to defend their class interests.

ON THE PICKET LINE

Hundreds rally in Scotland city against plant closures

COATBRIDGE, Scotland—Blowing whistles, shaking collection buckets, and chanting, 200 trade unionists marched through Stirling, Scotland, November 11, to protest a government decision to cut jobs and possibly close 64 Remploy factories. Remploy is a system of small government-owned plants that employ thousands of disabled workers to do contract work.

Knitwear workers from the Community union, who have been striking two days each week since September 28 against the Edinburgh Woollen Mill (EWM) in nearby Mackinnon, joined the march in Stirling. The strikes by 110 workers for a 2.5 percent pay raise there have affected sales at an on-site retail shop owned by EWM. The Mackinnon workers held an impromptu protest outside an EWM shop in Stirling as they marched in support of the Remploy workers.

Meanwhile, 400 workers in nearby

Uddingston struck the Tunnocks biscuit factory on November 3 and 6. The members of the Transport and General Workers Union, who currently get paid £6.25 an hour (£1 = US\$1.90), are demanding an increase to £7 an hour. “Everyone’s stood together,” reported union steward Ann McLoughlan November 6, as they mounted pickets on the plant’s three entrances. Further strike action is planned for November 14.

—Peter Clifford

Machinists strike Arizona Raytheon plant

TUCSON, Arizona—Nearly 2,000 workers at a Raytheon Missile Systems plant here went on strike November 6 against company takeback demands. The day before, the workers, represented by the International Association of Machinists Local 933, voted to reject Raytheon’s contract proposal by a margin of 1,018 to 111.

The main issue in the strike is the



Militant/Pete Clifford

Some 200 trade unionists marched November 11 in Stirling, Scotland, protesting government plans to cut jobs and close 64 state-owned plants.

company’s demand that workers increase the amount they pay for medical coverage from \$1,400 a year to nearly \$2,800 annually over the three years of the proposed contract.

According to Anna Vidal, who has worked at the missile plant for seven years, Raytheon expects hourly workers to pay for benefits at the same rate of salaried employees. “They keep

taking something away. They just take, take, take,” she said. “All we are asking for is a fair contract. Nothing more. Nothing less.”

—Eric Austin

Workers picket Pittsburgh seafood plant

PITTSBURGH—Workers at Benkovitz Seafood here are picketing the company daily, with many working people honking their horns as they pass by. Most of the workers are represented by Local 23 of the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) union, and a few drivers, by the Teamsters.

According to workers, the fight began when R.J. McSorely, president of Benkovitz’s parent company Nordic Holdings LLP, refused to allow workers from the wholesale department into work October 15. Workers say that with no notice whatsoever, he told them they no longer had jobs because he had sold the building housing the wholesale operation.

Among the locked-out wholesale department workers is Teddy Stolp, who worked as a skinner and packer. With 23 years of seniority, Stolp was only making \$10.50 an hour. The union is providing financial assistance, he said, but he now has no health insurance.

—Cindy Jaquith

As New Zealand mine bosses face court charges for worker’s death, second miner killed on the job

BY ANNALUCIA VERMUNT

AUCKLAND, New Zealand—A November 21 court hearing will hear charges relating to the death on the job of coal miner Robert McGowan earlier this year at a mine owned by Black Reef Mine Ltd. Mine manager Gary Haddow, director Shane Bocock, and the company face charges before the Greymouth District Court.

McGowan was killed March 8 by an inrush of water after miners blasted into the flooded shaft of an adjacent abandoned mine. Haddow was working with him but survived by clinging to a roof bolt.

While this investigation has been going on, another miner, Bernard Green, 47, was killed in a roof collapse September 8 at the nearby Roa mine. Green was working with nine other miners when he noticed the rock starting to fall. He yelled to his co-workers to run but the rock fell on him. Green had 30 years of mining experience.

Green and McGowan lived in the adjacent mining communities of Runanga and Rapahoe, on the West Coast of the South Island of New Zealand.

The charges laid by the Department of Labor include failing to keep an operations record, failing to ensure a mining plan was in place, failing to ensure escape routes existed in the event of an inrush of water, and failing to ensure employees drilled ahead to avoid breaking into old workings. A third person, whose name has not been made public, also faces charges.

McGowan’s widow, Valma, said in an October 28 phone interview that she was not satisfied with the charges. “Shane Bocock was brand-new to mining,” she said. “He bought the mine the previous year and had never been involved in mining before. The mines inspector failed to check that the mine was operating safely despite concerns raised by the geologist. That is why I demanded that the mines inspector be stood down.” The mines inspector works for the

Department of Labor.

“I don’t know if Robert’s life would have been saved,” she added, “but I have never heard of a death where there was so many contributing factors, including the lax attitude of the labor department.”

The Greymouth police announced on September 13 that they were looking into the possibility of manslaughter charges in relation to Robert’s death. “We are looking at the culpability of all the people that are involved,” they said.

The fatal incident at Black Reef occurred after the miners blasted through to old mine workings. The Roa coal mine, where Green was killed, is a century-old mine that has been reopened by a private company. Reworking old mines is part of the broader expansion of coal mining

in the area.

On October 13 plans were announced to expand the state-run Solid Energy mine at Spring Creek and develop a new area, including the hiring of more workers.

Another mine, Pike River Coal, is under development by New Zealand Oil and Gas. The first coal is due out of the mine in November and production is projected build up to 1 million tons a year by 2008.

“Pike River hopes that record worldwide steel production, driven by China and India in particular, will keep pressure on coking coal prices,” the *New Zealand Herald* reported. The consequence so far of this profit-driven push to accelerate the extraction of coal has been two mine deaths in New Zealand this year, the first since 1998.

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



November 27, 1981

There is ominous new evidence of military activity in the immediate vicinity of the small Caribbean island of Grenada, according to Don Rojas, editor of the *Free West Indian*.

“We consider the situation to be extremely dangerous,” Rojas told the *Militant* in a telephone interview November 13.

“We are taking all necessary steps to ensure that our country and our revolution is adequately defended,” Rojas added. Grenadian armed forces have been on a state of alert, he said.

“We have information that within the last 48 hours there have been a lot of troop movements in the vicinity of Barbados—a lot of naval activity and a number of military aircraft have landed in Barbados,” Rojas said....

Grenada is viewed as a threat because it “is the first in the English-speaking Caribbean to have had a revolution,” Prime Minister [Maurice] Bishop said.



November 26, 1956

Every seaport in the United States was tied up yesterday in the first nation-wide longshore strike in history. The East Coast had already been tied up from Maine to Texas for four days by the International Longshoremen’s Association (independent). Yesterday the International Longshoremen’s and Warehousemen’s Union shut down the West Coast ports in a 24-hour sympathy strike with the ILA.

The central aim of the ILA strike is to win their first coastwise contract. The militancy and solidarity being displayed by the ranks lays a good basis for winning their demand....

The shipowners and stevedoring companies are offering strong resistance to the demands of the dock workers, particularly on the issue of a coastwise contract. As a bargaining club they are threatening to secure an 80-day Taft-Hartley injunction.



November 28, 1931

Japanese imperialism continues to entrench herself more strongly in Manchuria, and pushes her military operations persistently and sharply....

The Chinese masses sharply resent the efforts of Japan to make what amounts to a colony of Manchuria. The proletariat is compelled to carry the brunt of the battles, not only its own, but that of its enemies and exploiters. As pointed out in the *Militant* hitherto, demonstrations and the economic boycott were involved at the outset of the present struggle. These are now on the increase, and the historical weapon of the Chinese, the economic boycott, in this instance of Japanese goods, is being linked up more and more with political manifestations against the Chinese bourgeoisie.

In Japan there has been an increase of protest by workers and workers’ organizations against the Japanese government and its depredations upon Manchuria.

'Books liberate' is theme of Venezuela fair

Continued from front page
sciousness of the people."

Venezuelan president Hugo Chávez presided over the opening ceremony. Speakers included Francisco Sesto, Venezuela's minister of culture, and other representatives of government and cultural institutions here. A number of those on the platform were from Cuba, the fair's country of honor this year. They included Abel Prieto, Cuba's minister of culture, and Iroel Sánchez, president of the Cuban Book Institute. Twenty-two Cuban publishers and cultural institutions are represented at the fair.

As part of the Venezuelan government's efforts to make world literature more widely accessible, Chávez announced that the Ministry of Culture will begin distributing 1.5 million free copies of a three-volume edition of Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables*. Thousands began lining up as soon as the fair opened to get their copies of this classic.

Two historic figures are being honored at the book fair—Ernesto Che Guevara, the Argentine-born leader of the Cuban Revolution, and Francisco de Miranda, a leader of the early 19th century independence struggle in Venezuela against Spanish colonial rule—along with Venezuelan poet Ramón Palomares.

Abel Prieto described 10 of the first 12 titles published under the ALBA Cultural Fund, a new agreement on cultural collaboration between the governments of Cuba, Venezuela, and Bolivia. Some 10,000 copies of each of the 12 titles will be distributed in all three countries.

"There is a need to foster anti-imperialist and anti-colonialist sentiments with a collection of books," Prieto said. Among the works to be distributed are titles by Cuban writers José Martí, Roberto Fernández Retamar,



Militant/Argiris Malapanis

Thousands of people line up November 12 at Parque del Este in Caracas, Venezuela, to get their copy of a three-volume edition of Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables* being distributed for free at the Venezuela International Book Fair.

and Francisco Pívidal, author of a book on Simón Bolívar, as well as Che Guevara's *Bolivian Diary*.

The Cuban Book Institute has do-

ated 600 works of Cuban literature to Venezuela's National Library as part of cultural agreements signed at the opening of the book fair. "This is a

contribution to the Venezuelan people so they have greater access to works by Cuban authors," said Iroel Sánchez.

The fair, which until 2003 was much smaller and had less of an international character, includes video screenings, talks by authors, book presentations, forums, poetry readings, and dance and other performances. Most events are held in tents or at the amphitheater in the park.

For the third straight year, U.S.-based Pathfinder Press has a booth. Pathfinder is also organizing three book presentations this year. These include events to discuss *Che Guevara Talks to Young People* and *Our History Is Still Being Written: The Story of Three Chinese-Cuban Generals in the Cuban Revolution*.

A meeting will also be held to present the two latest issues of the Marxist magazine *Nueva Internacional*, which Pathfinder distributes. Issue nos. 6 and 7 feature the articles "Capitalism's Long Hot Winter Has Begun" and "Our Politics Start with the World," both by Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party.

Nicaraguan president-elect Ortega reassures businessmen, landowners

BY SAM MANUEL

Nicaraguan president-elect Daniel Ortega, reiterating his campaign promises, has assured businessmen that his government will encourage foreign investment, support a free trade agreement with Washington, and not allow any land takeovers by peasants. Ortega, candidate of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN), won Nicaragua's November 5 presidential elections. He will take office January 10.

A U.S. State Department spokesman said Washington looks to establish "positive relations" with the new Nicaraguan government.

Ortega beat out five other candidates, taking 38 percent of the vote. The opposition to the FSLN was split between Liberal Alliance candidate Eduardo Montealegre, a Harvard-trained banker who received 29 percent, and José Rizo of the former ruling Constitutionalist Liberal Party, who received 26 percent. The Montealegre wing had broken away from the Constitutionalist Liberals after former president Arnaldo Alemán was convicted on corruption charges.

In July 1979 a popular uprising led by the FSLN overthrew the U.S.-backed Somoza dictatorship and established a workers and farmers government. To try to overturn the revolution, Washington organized a counterrevolutionary army, known as the *contras*, who were eventually defeated after a massive effort by working people in a six-year war.

Despite this victory, the FSLN leadership retreated from the anticapitalist road they started down in 1979, and by 1989 had transformed the organization into a bourgeois electoral machine, leading to the demise of the workers and farmers government. They increasingly advocated policies that relied on market mechanisms and deepening integration of the Nicaraguan economy into the world capitalist market. Having demobilized and disillusioned working people, the FSLN lost the presidential election in 1990.

In this year's elections, the FSLN campaign slogan was "Jobs, Peace, Reconciliation." Ortega issued denunciations of "savage capitalism" while pledging to maintain the basic free-market policies of the previous government. In a show of "reconciliation," Ortega's running mate was Jaime Morales, a former leader of the *contras*.

The day after winning the election Ortega assured businessmen that their investments were safe. "No one is going

to allow seizure of property big or small. We need to eradicate poverty, but you don't do that by getting rid of investment and those who have resources," he said, according to the Reuters news agency.

"We will not promote or accept land seizures," Ortega said November 11, speaking before 1,000 farmers who supported his campaign. "We must respect property." Instead, he said, the government would buy land for peasants, which they would have to pay "little by little even if it is with a sack of corn." Nicaragua remains one of the most impoverished countries in the Americas.

Ortega has made peace with Catholic church hierarchy in Managua, which actively opposed the revolution throughout the 1980s. At a mass attended by Ortega, Managua archbishop Leopoldo Brenes called on the defeated candidates to work "as a team" with the new government.

On October 26 the Nicaraguan legislature approved a bill banning abortions under all circumstances. Opponents of a woman's right to choose abortion, including leaders of the Catholic church, pushed for the bill, which Ortega supported.

New Greek-language book on 'Cuba and Africa,' Pathfinder titles

BY GEORGES MEHRABIAN

ATHENS, Greece—The new Greek-language book *Cuba and Africa, Cuba's Contribution to the Liberation Struggle in Africa*, by Fidel Castro, was the centerpiece of a meeting hosted by the Cuban ambassador here November 6.

The title, published by Diethnes Vima, contains a Dec. 2, 2005, speech by Castro on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the Cuban mission to Angola as well as excerpts of speeches by Nelson Mandela and Castro at a 1991 Havana rally. The material explains the historic significance of Cuba's internationalist solidarity in helping Angola defeat the invading forces of apartheid South Africa and accelerating the demise of the apartheid system.

More than 40 guests attended the meeting at the Cuban embassy. The event also commemorated the anniversary of the return of the remains of 3,000 Cubans who fell in combat during internationalist missions in Africa, and the 50th anniversary of the landing of the yacht *Granma* in Cuba, which launched the 1956–58 revolutionary war there.

The meeting was chaired by Cuban cultural attaché Ana Rosa Rojas. Speakers included ambassador Hermes Herrera Hernández; Costas Toumasatos, president of the Greek-Cuban Friend-

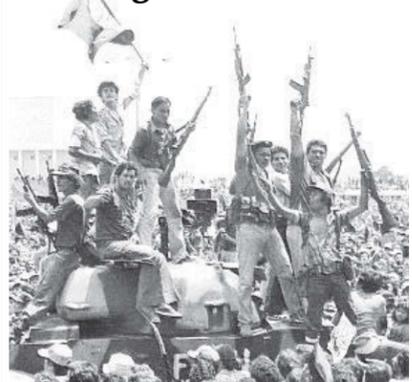
ship Society, and Natasha Terlexis, president of Diethnes Vima.

Thirteen copies of the newest book were purchased at the reception along with five other titles on the Cuban Revolution. Following the meeting the Greek-Cuban Friendship Society ordered 100 copies. Nine Athens bookstores have ordered 39 copies. Volunteers and friends of Diethnes Vima attended a dinner October 21 at a restaurant in downtown Athens to celebrate the publication of this and other recent titles. These include a new edition of *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics: Working-Class Politics and the Unions* by Jack Barnes, and *The Revolution Betrayed* by Leon Trotsky.

Giorgos Simopolos, who translated the new title on Cuba and Africa and helped prepare the title by Trotsky, opened the gathering saying, "Cuba's selfless internationalist aid goes to the heart of what the Cuban Revolution is all about advancing the struggle of working people worldwide."

Participants at the dinner purchased eight books, bringing sales of the three new titles to nearly 100 ordered at bookstores and 24 from tables at political events. Terlexis reported plans to field sales teams to northern Greece and to Cyprus.

The Rise and Fall of the Nicaraguan Revolution



This issue, no. 9, of *New International*, based on ten years of working-class journalism inside Nicaragua, traces the lessons from the rise and fall of the workers and farmers government there. \$14

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'Che teaches us need to make revolution'

Youth panel discusses 'Che Guevara Talks to Young People' at Caracas book fair

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS
AND CHRISTIAN CASTRO

CARACAS, Venezuela, November 12—This book “is a contribution to youth, and to all revolutionaries, to be used in the struggle for a better world,” said Yoel Barrios, a leader of the Union of Young Communists (UJC) of Cuba, in opening a public forum here this evening. Barrios chaired the panel presentation of *Che Guevara Talks to Young People*.

The presentation was one of many such events held as part of Venezuela's Second International Book Fair November 9–19 (see front-page article).

The panel included Enrique Ramos, president of the National Youth Institute of Venezuela; Luis Vizcay of the UJC; Euris Ospino of the Youth of the Fifth Republic (JVR), affiliated with Venezuela's governing party, the Movement of the Fifth Republic; and Emily Paul of the Young Socialists in the United States.

Che Guevara Talks to Young People was first published by Pathfinder Press in 2000 in both English and Spanish. It includes speeches by Guevara between 1959 and 1964. A Cuban edition was released by Editora Abril, publishing house of the UJC, later in 2000.

“This book has previously been presented in Cuba and other countries,” Barrios told the audience of 60. “But we couldn't let the opportunity of this fair pass without also presenting here a title that is so important to the future of humanity.” As the book explains, in 1955 Argentine-born Ernesto “Che” Guevara joined the movement led by the July 26 Movement and Rebel Army, headed by Fidel Castro, to overthrow the U.S.-backed Batista dictatorship. Originally the troop doctor, Guevara became commander of one of the main columns. The victory by Cuba's workers and farmers in January 1959 opened the door to the first socialist revolution in the Americas.

As a central leader of the new revolutionary government, Guevara served as a world spokesperson, president of the National Bank, minister of industry, and in other duties. In 1965 he led a column of Cuban internationalist volunteers to join anti-imperialist combatants in the Congo. He later headed a guerrilla campaign against the U.S.-backed dictatorship in Bolivia and was killed by its army in October 1967 in a CIA-organized operation.

Transforming universities

“The most significant thing for me in rereading this book the last few days is the relevance for today of what Che told young people more than 40 years ago,” said Luis Vizcay of the UJC.

Vizcay quoted Guevara's December 1959 speech to university students in Santa Clara. “The university should color itself black and color itself mulatto—not just as regards students but also professors. It should paint itself the color of workers and peasants... because the university is the patrimony of no one but the people of Cuba,” Guevara said.

Che was addressing a real problem the Cuban Revolution set out to resolve, Vizcay said. When the revolution triumphed in 1959, the class composition of the student body and faculty at Cuba's three universities reflected the exploitative society workers and peasants were fighting to leave behind.

“This is a reality at universities in many countries of the Americas today,”



Militant/Amanda Ulman

Above: November 12 panel presenting *Che Guevara Talks to Young People* at international book fair in Caracas, Venezuela. From left, Luis Vizcay of the Union of Young Communists (UJC) of Cuba; Enrique Ramos, president of the National Youth Institute of Venezuela; Yoel Barrios of the UJC, who chaired the program; Emily Paul of the Young Socialists in the United States; and Euris Ospino of the Youth of the Fifth Republic (JVR) of Venezuela. Inset: Part of the audience of 60 at the presentation.



Militant/Argiris Malapanis

Vizcay said, where those lacking financial resources and youth of oppressed nationalities have much less chance of being students.

Vizcay pointed out that Che had abandoned his dream of becoming a famous medical researcher—a lone, self-sacrificing hero, an image that aggrandizes bourgeois individualism—to become a revolutionary combatant, a communist.

“I began the ups and downs of my career as a university student, a member of the middle class, a doctor who shared the same horizons, the same youthful aspirations you have,” Guevara told students in Santa Clara. “In the course of the struggle, however, I changed and became convinced of the imperative need for revolution.”

Che joined struggles to eradicate imperialism, which, Vizcay said, is the main cause of today's social ills that plague our continent—from poverty to preventable diseases to unemployment. Guevara knew that what was born in Cuba with the revolution “could become an example for the peoples of the world,” the UJC leader said.

Book distributed across Venezuela

Enrique Ramos of the National Youth Institute, part of Venezuela's Ministry of Education, called attention to one point that particularly delighted him from Che's 1963 speech to an international conference of architecture students held in Cuba.

Explaining that technology is a weapon that serves different ends for different classes, Che pointed to a mural on the auditorium wall depicting a U.S.-made M-1 Garand rifle. “When it was in the hands of Batista's soldiers and they were firing on us, that weapon was hideous,” Guevara said.

“But that same weapon became extraordinarily beautiful when we captured it, when we wrested it from a soldier's hands, when it became part of the arsenal of the people's army. In our hands that weapon became an object of dignity.”

Ramos reported that the National Youth Institute is now distributing *Che Guevara Talks to Young People* at youth centers across the country known as Casas de la Juventud. The day before, Ramos had helped inaugurate such a center in the nearby city of Maracay (see

accompanying box).

Speaking on behalf of the JVR, Euris Ospino said that Che Guevara inspires young people to become rebels.

The need to make a revolution

“The first thing Che teaches us, which he gave his life fighting for, is the need to make a revolution,” said Emily Paul of the Young Socialists. “This can only be done by joining and building a revolutionary organization rooted in the working class.”

She noted that the YS, together with the Socialist Workers Party, aims “to educate and organize young people to join the working-class struggle to make a socialist revolution in the United States, to emulate the example of the Cuban Revolution in the belly of the imperialist beast.”

Paul quoted what Guevara told a group of medical students and health workers in August 1960. “To be a revolutionary doctor... there must first be a revolution,” Che had told them, drawing on his own experience as a young person. Once set on that course of helping make a revolution, Che never turned back, Paul said.

In his speeches, she said, Che emphasizes the need to be disciplined, to study, to absorb Marxism in order to be effective.

“The Young Socialists work to emulate the example Che explains here,” Paul said. She pointed to involvement by YS members this year in the mass working-class mobilizations calling for the legalization of all immigrants, as well as actions to demand “U.S. hands off Venezuela and Cuba!” and U.S. troops out of Iraq, Afghanistan, and Korea.

Speaking to youth working at Cuba's ministry of industry in 1964, which he headed at the time, Guevara explained the need to “politicize the ministry.” That was the only way, he said, to change it from being a “cold, a very bureaucratic place, a nest of nit-picking bureaucrats and bores, from the minister on down.”

The Young Socialists, Paul said, “are becoming more politicized through our work with others to promote Pathfinder's newest book, *Our History Is Still Being Written: The Story of Three Chinese-Cuban Generals in the Cuban Revolution*.” She described a meeting on this book she had helped build four days earlier at the University of California in Los Angeles (see front-page article). Events such as this, she said, are providing new opportunities to educate Asian Americans and others in the United States about the Cuban Revolution and win them to supporting—and emulating—its example.

Revolutionary cadre for a lifetime

A half-hour discussion followed the presentations.

One of those who spoke was Inel Pérez, who had worked at Cuba's ministry of industry just after Guevara left that assignment. Pérez explained how Che “worked tirelessly to train revolutionary cadres who would dedicate their lives to building a new society.”

A Venezuelan student pointed out that defenders of imperialism try to sanitize Che by plastering his photos on T-shirts, disco walls, and beer mugs in order to erase what he actually said and fought for. “We need programs like this so young people can know the real Che,” he said.

A young woman added that the book needs to be distributed in working-class barrios throughout Venezuela.

Most of the audience were Venezuelans who found out about the event from the book fair program or flyers at the Pathfinder booth and elsewhere. Nearly 40 copies of *Che Talks to Young People* were sold leading up to and during the meeting.

Venezuelan gov't opens youth centers for education, recreation in working-class areas

BY RÓGER CALERO

MARACAY, Venezuela—Some 100 young people gathered here November 11 to celebrate the opening of a new Casa de la Juventud youth center.

Since January the Venezuelan government's National Youth Institute has opened 132 such centers and more are planned. Enrique Ramos, president of the institute, participated in the event.

The center is located in a working-class community in this city 60 miles west of Caracas. Ramos and others said it will be used for weekly vocational and other classes and for social and political activities.

The center includes a small gym, a kitchen, a library, two music studios, and recreational facilities. Three new sewing machines had just been installed for sewing classes. The center also offers other classes free of charge, including language courses and tutoring for students facing difficulties in high school.

Emily Paul spoke at the opening on behalf of the Young Socialists of the United States. Ramos told the audience that the two socialists from the United States at the event had donated to the center's library several revolutionary books published by Pathfinder Press.

The event was videotaped for a program to be broadcast the following week by VTV, the state-owned national television channel.

Book by Chinese-Cuban generals: ‘A practical example of how to fight, win, and defend gains’

Pathfinder president speaks in Cuba on ‘Our History Is Still Being Written’

The following remarks by Mary-Alice Waters were given at an October 20 presentation in Santiago de Cuba of *Our History Is Still Being Written: The Story of Three Chinese-Cuban Generals in the Cuban Revolution*. Waters is president of Pathfinder Press and editor of the book, which is available in both Spanish and English.

Also on the panel were Gen. Moisés Sío Wong, one of the three authors, and Iraida Aguirrechu, a senior editor of *Editora Política*, publishing house of the Central Committee of the Cuban Communist Party. An article on Sío Wong’s remarks appears on the facing page.

The meeting was part of a speaking tour of seven Cuban cities to discuss and promote *Our History Is Still Being Written*. Sío Wong, Aguirrechu, and Waters spoke at similar events in Ciego de Avila, Holguín, and Bayamo. Gen. Armando Choy addressed meetings in Quemado de Güines and Corralillo in the central province of Villa Clara. And all three authors—Sío Wong, Choy, and Gen. Gustavo Chui—spoke along with Aguirrechu and Waters at a meeting in Havana. Each event was hosted by the Association of Combatants of the Cuban Revolution along with the municipal government and the Cuban Communist Party in the province.

The footnotes are by the Militant.



BY MARY-ALICE WATERS

On behalf of Pathfinder, I want to express our appreciation to the national leadership of the Association of Combatants of the Cuban Revolution, who invited us to join you here today, and to the compañeros of the party, municipal government, and the National Institute of State Reserves who have done so much to assure the success of today’s activities.

I also want to thank our chairperson, Iraida Aguirrechu of *Editora Política*, and call attention to the fact that her editorial professionalism and political determination played no small part in bringing this book to fruition.

Above all, of course, our appreciation goes to generals Choy, Chui, and Sío Wong. It has been an honor and a pleasure to work with each of them.



I want to say a few words about why this book is important outside Cuba, especially in the United States, as well as the kind of reception it has enjoyed since it came off the press in English and Spanish at the beginning of this year.

To mention just one example: last week, as we were preparing to leave for Cuba, we received a very thoughtful review of the book published in the widely circulated *Journal of Chinese Overseas*. It was written by Li Anshan, a professor at the School of International Studies at Peking University.¹

When we began the interviews that eventually became this powerful book, none of us thought it would be four years in the making. Nor that the end result

1. The review can be found at www.pathfinderpress.com, clicking on the text “Recently reviewed in the *Journal of Chinese Overseas*.”



Militant/Martín Koppel

Speaking at the October 20 presentation of *Our History Is Still Being Written* in Santiago de Cuba were General Moisés Sío Wong, one of the book’s three authors, editor Mary-Alice Waters, and Iraida Aguirrechu of *Editora Política*. The event was part of a seven-city speaking tour across the island to discuss and promote the book.



Militant/Carlos Samaniego

April 9 rally of 30,000 workers and others in St. Paul, Minnesota, demanding legalization of all immigrants. Actions such as these, which were followed on May 1 by the first multi-city political strike in U.S. history “have changed politics in the United States,” Waters said. They underscore the need to spread the truth about the example of the Cuban Revolution.

would be, in fact, an introduction to the Cuban Revolution itself—not only “as it was,” but as it continues, today.

The book begins with the stories of three young Cuban rebels of Chinese ancestry who grew up under different social and economic conditions, in three different regions of the country. We learn how and why they, like thousands of others of their generation, threw themselves into the popular revolutionary struggle against the Batista dictatorship.

It initiates us into the rich, and still too-little-known, history of Chinese immigration to Cuba—immigration that in the mid-1800s was proportionally greater than anywhere else in the Americas, including the United States. And it recounts the historically unique place, and unblemished record, of the Chinese combatants in the Cuban independence wars of the 19th century.

But there is much more.

The book includes an important piece of the story of Cuba’s nearly 16-year internationalist mission in Angola. We have already seen the impact of this section of the book on many Chinese readers in the United States, especially. They’ve described the pride they feel upon learning that indeed there were Chinese on the front lines of the historic battles that

brought down the apartheid regime of South Africa.

The reviewer from Peking University, however, puts his finger on the most important aspect of the book. “Although there are striking descriptions of the anti-Batista struggle, the guerrilla war, and the socialist revolution,” he comments, “it is the depiction of what is happening in Cuba today that I find most appealing.”

Indeed, one of the richest parts of the book is the final section, entitled “The Special Period and Beyond,” in which each of the three compañeros talks about the responsibilities he shoulders today. Organizing the work to transform the infrastructure of the Port of Havana and restore the environmental health of its bay. Leading the military-patriotic work of the Association of Combatants of the Cuban Revolution. Overseeing the expansion and integrity of the strategic reserves of the state. Transforming the structure of agriculture in Cuba with the establishment of the small-scale urban vegetable farms. Supporting the popular struggle advancing in Venezuela. And above all, preparing to meet the unpredictable, but inevitable, aggressions of the declining empire to the north.

From Iraq and Afghanistan, to occupied Guantánamo, we see the future

imperialism has in store for us, a future of war and repression—inside the United States and throughout the world—if we do not succeed in taking from them for all time the power to rule.

Above all, this is a book that helps to answer the most important questions of our epoch: What is a socialist revolution? Where do the men and women who will make such a revolution come from? How do they transform themselves and each other in the course of their struggles, becoming human beings capable of accomplishing what even they never dreamed possible?

Through more than five decades of struggle, the concrete, living example of the Cuban Revolution offers our class a practical example of how to fight; more importantly, how to win; and most importantly, how to organize to

‘This book helps answer the question: What is a socialist revolution? Where do the men and women who will make it come from?’

defend what we’ve won, how to involve increasing numbers of toilers in that effort to advance and extend those original conquests.

That is why this book is so important outside of Cuba. Why Pathfinder published it. Why young socialists and communist workers are selling it not only through bookstores, to libraries, on the worldwide web, and at conferences and political events, but at factories and campuses, and from tables on the streets of working-class districts in towns and cities across North America. That is why it appeals so broadly not only to youth and working people who are Asian but to militant-minded members of other oppressed nationalities and national minorities in the United States, especially those who are Black and Mexican, and to determined immigrants from all corners of the world.

And I should add that we also know—including from letters written by our five Cuban brothers—that this book, like many others Pathfinder publishes, is being circulated and read in prisons across the United States.²



Of the more than 400 titles Pathfinder Press keeps in print, some 60 are books, **Continued on page 11**

2. The Cuban Five—Fernando González, René González, Antonio Guerrero, Gerardo Hernández, and Ramón Labañino—have been held in U.S. jails since 1998. They were convicted in 2001 of charges including conspiracy “to act as an unregistered foreign agent,” “to commit espionage,” and “to commit murder.” Sentences were handed down ranging from 15 years, to double life plus 15 years. The five—each of whom has been decorated “Hero of the Republic of Cuba”—had accepted assignments to infiltrate counterrevolutionary groups in the United States and keep the Cuban government informed about terrorist attacks being planned against the Cuban people. Millions worldwide have mobilized to condemn the convictions, sentences, and harsh conditions of detainment and to demand their release.

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

SANTIAGO DE CUBA, Cuba— “I feel very moved being here in this heroic city, at the very spot where the Commander-in-Chief proclaimed the victory of the insurrectional struggle,” said Gen. Moisés Sío Wong in opening his remarks to the October 20 presentation here of *Our History Is Still Being Written: The Story of Three Chinese-Cuban Generals in the Cuban Revolution*.

The event took place in Santiago’s municipal government building. It was from the balcony of that building that Fidel Castro spoke to the people of Santiago in the early morning hours of Jan. 2, 1959, after the forces of the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista surrendered the city to the Rebel Army, as Batista himself fled the country.

Sío Wong, one the book’s three authors, was himself fighting in central Cuba as a combatant in Rebel Army Column 8 when that historic announcement was made in Santiago. But his memory of the revolutionary victory in 1959 is still fresh.

He had entered the battle against the Batista regime as a high school student in the early 1950s. Joining the Rebel Army in 1957, he fought under the command of Ernesto Che Guevara during the final months of Cuba’s revolutionary war.

Since the triumph, Sío Wong has shouldered many duties, including as head of logistics for Cuba’s volunteer internationalist military mission in Angola. A brigadier general in the Revolutionary Armed Forces, in the early 1990s, he helped initiate the small-scale urban agriculture program that has since expanded throughout Cuba, and he later served as consultant on a similar program in Venezuela.

Since 1986 Sío Wong has been president of the National Institute of State Reserves. He is also president of the Cuba-China Friendship Association.

Seven-city tour

As part of a seven-city tour of Cuba in October to discuss and promote *Our History Is Still Being Written*, Sío Wong spoke at the Santiago meeting together with the book’s editor, Mary-Alice Waters (see her remarks on facing page), and Iraida Aguirrechu of the Cuban publishing house Editora Política.

He began his remarks by thanking “the *compañeros* and *compañeras* of the party and government here who organized this event.”

How did the book come about? he asked.

‘An important introduction to Cuba’s socialist revolution’ Gen. Moisés Sío Wong speaks at book presentation in Santiago de Cuba



Militant/Martín Koppel

Gen. Moisés Sío Wong speaks at October 20 presentation of *Our History Is Still Being Written* in Santiago. Also on platform are Iraida Aguirrechu (center) of Editora Política, publishing house of Communist Party of Cuba, and Mary-Alice Waters, editor of book.

“Through an idea by compañero Harry Villegas¹ who, in a meeting with Mary-Alice, proposed an interview with the three generals of Chinese descent”—Armando Choy, Gustavo Chui, and himself. The first interview took place in February 2002.

After that, Sío Wong said, the interview “kept getting extended: 2003, 2004, 2005. We kept getting new questions, by

e-mail, during new visits, and through compañera Iraida, who has been very persistent. I would ask Iraida when the book would be published. ‘When you finish answering all the questions,’ she would reply.”

So, he continued, “Mary-Alice, Martín [Koppel], and other compañeros would send their questions: To Choy, to talk about this. To Chui, to clarify some other question. Another question for Sío Wong.

“Besides telling about our lives and the participation of Chinese in the independence wars, new questions arose: What is the Battle of Ideas? Our involvement in Angola? The energy revolution (at that time it wasn’t yet called the energy revolution)? Our contribution in Venezuela?”

This testifies to “the professionalism and skill” of the interviewers, Sío Wong said. “You say many things in an interview. But then it has to be synthesized and boiled down, without losing the essence. Things have to be explained, keeping in mind the audience to whom the book is directed.” The audience in the United States, he added, drawing on a point Waters had made, operates under conditions where information about Cuba “is blocked and totally distorted.”

“That is why we want to highlight the work of Pathfinder Press in spreading the truth within the belly of the beast,” Sío Wong said. “They are telling the truth about the Cuban Revolution, and about the struggle to free the Five Heroes, to whom they send all these books. And in this way, they make a

contribution not only in the United States but in Canada and elsewhere, including now in Venezuela, and later in China.”

The Cuban general pointed to the importance of having this book—“which, as Mary-Alice said, is an introduction to the Cuban Revolution”—published in Chinese. He noted that Waters had described how at the book presentation in September at the Chinese Historical Society in San Francisco, California, translation had been offered into Cantonese. A large percentage of Chinese immigrants spoke Cantonese, including those who emigrated to Cuba.

“In China there are some 50 dialects,” he said. “The official spoken tongue is Pekinese, or Mandarin, but the writing is the same in all the dialects. That’s why the decision of the Chinese publishing house, with Pathfinder’s consent, to translate and publish this book in Chinese is so important.

“China is our strategic ally economically and politically, and they are our brothers in struggle. As president of the Friendship Association, I always say that the friendship between Cuba and China was not born on Sept. 28, 1960, when diplomatic relations were opened; it was born on the battlefield.”

The Chinese edition “will also circulate in the United States,” Sío Wong pointed out. “As you heard, many thousands of Chinese in the United States don’t know English or Spanish, but they do speak and read Chinese, and they too are going to have access to this book.”

A little-known history

“What importance does the publication of this book have for Cuba?” asked Sío Wong.

He noted that Pathfinder had only been able to bring a limited number of copies for sale at the presentations across Cuba. For all those who want to read the book, however, he explained that Editora Política will release a Cuban edition next year.

As soon as it’s available, “we’ll do another launching here in Santiago, together with both Chui and Choy as well,” he said.

Sío Wong pointed out that the participation of Chinese “in our wars of independence is little known in Cuba.”

Many people, he said, “pass by the monument on Línea Street in Havana with the famous words of General Gonzalo de Quesada, secretary to José Martí,² who said that in Cuba’s wars of independence, ‘There was not a single Chinese-Cuban traitor, there was not a single Chinese-Cuban deserter.’

“Of the hundreds of thousands of Chinese who were here at the end of the 19th century,” Sío Wong said, “not a single case is known of a Chinese who helped the Spaniards during that period.”

The Cuban general noted that the first Chinese had arrived in Cuba in 1847 through labor contracts signed in China. “They were virtual slaves,” he said. The European colonial powers, using the pretext of what they called the Opium War, attacked China and imposed a number of conditions. These included ceding Hong Kong to the British and opening another port, Amoy, now Xiamen.

At that time the African slave trade to

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The Cuban Revolution in World Politics a 17-title series available from Pathfinder Press



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THE STORY OF THREE CHINESE-CUBAN
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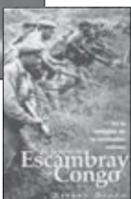
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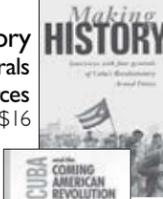
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Sío Wong in Santiago

Continued from page 9

the Americas had been banned for more than 20 years, but the planters continued bringing over African slaves anyway, though in smaller numbers.

Sío Wong said that it was the British who first began to bring over Chinese for their colonies in the Caribbean—including Guyana, Trinidad, and Jamaica. “And the Spanish then saw the opportunity to bring over cheap labor power for the development of the sugar industry,” he added.

“Some historians report that at the time, according to the 1841 census, there were a little over 400,000 white Spaniards, a slightly larger number of Black slaves, and some 150,000 free mulattos. There were more Blacks than Spaniards!” he said. “And some of the Spaniards were afraid, because there were slave uprisings and conspiracies.”

So the wealthy landowners in Cuba began bringing in large numbers of Chinese. The first ship arrived on June 3, 1847. “Next year will mark the 160th anniversary,” he noted. “To commemorate that date, the Chinese want to publish the book in the Chinese language and launch it then.”

Sío Wong pointed out that June 3 is also the birthday “of another ‘chino’ here in Cuba. Do you know who that is?” he asked the audience, as many shouted back, “Raúl!”

“Yes,” he said, referring to Raúl Castro. “They call him *El Chino*.”

Sío Wong said that during the second half of the 19th century more than 150,000 Chinese arrived in Cuba. They signed contracts for eight years of indentured labor and paid next to nothing. In practice, he said, they were bought and sold as slaves. Not being used to the hard work of the sugar harvest, some committed suicide, while others fled to *palenques*, settlements of fugitive slaves.

Chinese in independence wars

On Oct. 10, 1868, when Carlos Manuel de Céspedes sounded the call for Cuba’s independence struggle, thousands of Chinese and former African slaves joined the Liberation Army. “There were entire battalions of Chinese organized together in separate units since they spoke little Spanish,” the Cuban general explained.

In 1993, during the first visit to Cuba by China’s president Jiang Zemin, Sío Wong had been asked how many Chinese fought in Cuba’s wars of independence. “I said 6,000, but the exact number is not known,” he said. “In the rolls of the Liberation Army not a single Chinese name appears, because they would take on Spanish names, often the name of the owner who had contracted them, such as Ramón Fernández or Fernando González.”

Nevertheless, Sío Wong said, there were all-Chinese units that were outstanding in combat. He pointed to the Battle of Guásimas, for example, where Gen. Máximo Gómez confronted a Spanish column that greatly outnumbered the liberation forces in arms and men. After three days of combat, Gómez threw his reserves into the battle—a battalion of Chinese—and emerged victorious.

There were other heroic actions by the Chinese as well, Sío Wong said. For example, the Guáimaro Assembly in

1869 “when all the forces from different regions met with the government of the Republic in Arms. Those of you who have studied history,” he said, “know there was great disunity, above all during the war of 1868–78. During that time Máximo Gómez’s invasion of the west failed because the central government did not send the necessary reinforcements.

“Villa Clara sent a delegation to the Guáimaro Assembly that included its commanding general,” Sío Wong continued. “But he died of disease along the way. So they designated a Chinese soldier—Juan Anelay, who did not speak fluent Spanish—to speak to the assembly.

“The Chinese soldier took the floor and said: ‘You, the central government, are not sending us ammunition, rifles, food, or men. We are fighting for the independence of Cuba. Our general

‘In Cuba, the greatest measure taken against discrimination was to make a socialist revolution.’

died along the way. And you here are not giving real support.’ It was quite something!”

The Chinese-Cuban general pointed to another anecdote.

“As part of Antonio Maceo’s escort,” he said, “there was a group of Chinese who were present during the famous meeting in Los Mangos de Baraguá in 1878.³ They were at the main entrance when general Vicente García—the Lion of Las Tunas—arrived, and they wouldn’t let him through. The Chinese remembered Vicente García’s discipline at the time of the 1875 revolt at Lagunas de Varona.⁴ So Maceo had to go outside and say, ‘This is a patriotic general, let him pass.’”

Sío Wong pointed to another fact highlighting the role of Chinese in Cuba’s wars of independence. When the 1901 constitution was drafted, Article 65 stipulated that any foreigner who had fought for 10 years arms in hand was considered Cuban by birth and could become president of the republic. That article was included, he said, because many Cubans wanted Máximo Gómez to be president. When Gómez said no, Sío Wong explained,

3. Antonio Maceo was a military leader and strategist in Cuba’s three wars of independence against Spain in the 19th century. An Afro-Cuban known as the “Bronze Titan,” in 1878 he attended a meeting of independence army leaders at Los Mangos de Baraguá to discuss a proposed pact with Spain to end the first war. Maceo declared his opposition to the pact, which failed to grant Cuba’s independence. He issued what has become known in Cuban history as the “Baraguá Protest,” calling for continuation of the struggle. A general in Cuba’s final independence war that began in 1895, Maceo was killed in battle the following year.

4. In April 1875 troops of Cuba’s Liberation Army in Las Tunas under the command of Maj. Gen. Vicente García met at Lagunas de Varona and rebelled against the leadership of Cuba’s Republic in Arms. Although a number of independence fighters were also critical of the government’s conduct of the war against Spanish colonialism, Antonio Maceo and other leaders opposed the rebellion as an act of insubordination that weakened the struggle.



Reuters

In response to Washington’s calls for a “transition” to capitalism in Cuba, Sío Wong points to the real transition already under way: to the young leaders and combatants “who have expressed their determination to fight to the last drop of blood” to defend Cuba’s socialist revolution. Above: Cuban soldiers listen to a speech by Fidel Castro on Dec. 2, 2005, marking the 30th anniversary of Cuba’s internationalist mission in Angola.

“Bartolomé Masó was proposed, but the candidate of the Yankees was Tomás Estrada Palma. Bartolomé Masó withdrew and Estrada Palma became the first president.”

Sío Wong said that only four individuals met the requirement of Article 65: Máximo Gómez, who was Dominican; Gen. Carlos Roloff, who was Polish; and two Chinese: Lt. Col. José Bu and Capt. José Tolón, who had participated in the three independence wars. Some historians, he said, include General Rius Rivera, who was Puerto Rican and also a participant in the three wars.

In the same 1993 meeting with Chinese president Jiang Zemin mentioned earlier, Sío Wong said, “Fidel asked me, ‘How many Chinese took part in the final war of liberation, from 1956 through 1958?’ I told him, ‘Commander, I don’t know that either.’ Because even second-generation Chinese, when their Chinese ancestry comes from their mother, lost their Chinese names.

“For example,” Sío Wong asked the audience, “how many of you know that [Esteban] Lazo’s grandfather was Chinese?”⁵

As participants responded with laughter, he continued: “Look at Lazo’s features, his eyes, and you’ll see he is Chinese. He had to show Raúl a photo of his grandfather to prove it was true.”

Sío Wong noted other examples, including Bárbara Castillo, former minister of domestic trade, and Lázaro Barredo, editor of *Granma*, both of whose grandparents were Chinese.

“Thousands of Cubans have Chinese ancestry,” he said. “But the outstanding role of the Chinese in the independence wars, this aspect of Cuba’s history is little known.

“And this is not part of the history of any other country in the Americas where Chinese emigrated,” he added. He pointed to an interview he had read a few days earlier in the *Militant* with a Venezuelan woman of Chinese

5. Esteban Lazo, a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of Cuba, is currently responsible for the party’s ideological work. For many years Lazo, who is Afro-Cuban, was first secretary of the party’s Provincial Committee in Santiago de Cuba. He has been a vice president of Cuba’s Council of State since 1992.

ancestry. She said the Chinese who emigrated to Venezuela had not taken part in its independence war in the early 19th century, since they first arrived in 1856 after colonial rule had already been thrown off.

This same Venezuelan woman, Sío Wong said, told the *Militant* that Cuba is the only country she knows in the Americas where Chinese are not discriminated against.

That’s true, he said, because in Cuba, “the greatest measure taken against discrimination—against Chinese, blacks, women, the poor—was to make a socialist revolution.”

Solidarity with Angola

Sío Wong called attention to the extensive parts of *Our History Is Still Being Written* that recount Cuba’s volunteer internationalist mission in Angola—a mission each of the three generals helped lead.

“There’s a lot of disinformation in the United States, not just about the Cuban Revolution, but about Angola and what Cuba did there,” he said.

Between late 1975 and 1991, some 375,000 Cuban volunteers served in Angola helping that newly independent country defeat repeated invasions from the South African apartheid regime, as well as attacks by other pro-imperialist forces.

In 1988 the apartheid army was defeated by Cuban and Angolan forces, an outcome that also contributed to winning Namibia’s independence and hastened the demise of the white supremacist regime in South Africa itself.

Sío Wong pointed out that *Our History Is Still Being Written* includes not only accounts by the three generals of their experiences in Angola, but speeches by Fidel Castro and Nelson Mandela, as well as an excerpt from a 1991 speech by Raúl Castro greeting the last returning internationalist volunteers.

The real transition in Cuba

Concluding his remarks, the Cuban general commented on the composition of the audience in Santiago. “I don’t know if Mary-Alice, Martín, and other compañeros realize the significance of this,” he said.

He pointed out that after 15 years of “heroic resistance” during the

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Remarks by Waters

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pamphlets, and magazines that strive to make the history of the Cuban Revolution accessible to vanguard fighters and revolutionary-minded youth around the world. The real history, as told by Cubans who made it—with all its complexities, including its false starts, errors and corrections, sorrows as well as triumphs. But few—if any—of those 60 titles have received the kind of broad response we've witnessed to *Our History Is Still Being Written*.

Most interesting of all has been the warm reception it has gotten from hundreds of politically conscious Chinese and Chinese Americans, as well as Asian Americans of other nationalities. The official Asian population of the United States is some 13 million, about 4 percent of the total. And people of Chinese origin make up a sizable and growing percentage—some 2.5 million today by the government's own understated figures, which count only legal immigrants. It is estimated that one third of the population of San Francisco is Chinese.

Chinese workers make up a substantial portion of the workforce in industries such as garment and construction in cities like New York and San Francisco. And tens of thousands of Chinese students, both U.S.-born and from China, are enrolled in universities across the country.

Most residents of Chinese origin in the United States today are young. They have immigrated to the United States, or have been born there, since 1965 and especially since 1990. Those were landmark years when laws that had prohibited virtually all Asian immigration were modified, and "quotas" increased.

As here in Cuba, Chinese and other Asian immigrants in the United States have a long and proud history of struggle, part of the broader fight against the racism, nativist bigotry, and ruthless exploitation of workers and farmers organized by the U.S. capitalist rulers and accelerated with the rise and growing dominance of Yankee imperialism. New generations of Asian Americans are themselves learning that hidden history only as they join in new battles today and are educated by those who opened the road through previous decades of struggle.

They are among the tens of millions of immigrants from all over the world who are today placing a powerful stamp on the class struggle and prospects for labor in the United States.

Earlier this year, as many of you are aware, a massive proletarian movement for the legalization of immigrant workers exploded into the streets across the length and breadth of the United States. Millions of people—and not only immigrants—proudly marched under the banner, "We are workers, not criminals. Legalization now!"

The speed and power of the actions that swept the country last spring—driven by Mexican and other Central American workers above all—caught the U.S. rulers by surprise. Taking the initiative in their own hands and often defying the efforts of leaders who tried to contain them, they downed tools and took to the streets in cities large and small in numbers never before seen in the United States. On May 1, they carried out what was in fact the first multi-city political strike in U.S.

history. Their actions are irreversibly strengthening and politically enriching the workers movement. They have already changed politics in the United States.



This is the context in which meetings to launch *Our History Is Still Being Written* have been taking place.

Last month in San Francisco, nearly 200 turned out for a book presentation sponsored by the Chinese Historical Society of America—the oldest and best-known such society in the United States. Leaders of the Chinese and Japanese communities in the San Francisco Bay Area participated in the panel, as well as from the audience, and translation into Spanish and Cantonese was available for the entire meeting.

Next month the book will be presented at a National Asian American Student Conference near Chicago, as well as on the campus of the University of California in Los Angeles, home to one of the most important centers of Asian American studies in the United States. Another presentation will take place next month in Venezuela, with the participation of representatives of the Chinese community and others there, as part of the Caracas International Book Fair. In December, the Chinatown branch of the San Francisco Public Library will host a presentation. Plans are well advanced for a tour by one of the authors to present the book in major cities across Canada next March.

Similar work is under way in numerous other cities, but that gives you the idea. And we are just beginning.

In all of these events, one of the things that invariably wins an enthusiastic and spontaneous burst of applause is the announcement that the translation of the book into Chinese has already begun, along with plans to present the book in China itself next year as part of the activities commemorating the 160th anniversary of the arrival in Cuba, in June 1847, of the first shiploads of indentured workers from China. But participants in these meetings are even happier to learn that the Chinese translation will be available for distribution in the United States as well, where there are hundreds of thousands of Chinese workers who neither read nor speak either English or Spanish.



I want to end with an anecdote. Humorous though it may at first seem, it helps underscore the invaluable place of *Our History Is Still Being Written*. As we keep being reminded, there is literally no other book like it in Spanish, English, Chinese, or any other language.

At an Asian American studies conference earlier this year, one of the young professors who bought the book confessed he would read it with mixed emotions. He told us he was now going to have to revise his almost-finished doctoral dissertation because he had genuinely accepted as fact the propaganda put forward by the enemies of the revolution that there are no Chinese in Cuba anymore!

A typical example of this misinformation effort was an Associated Press story that appeared several months ago in the *Miami Herald*, under the headline, "Dwindling presence of Chinese immigrants in Cuba." While



Militant/Jacquie Henderson

Left: Mary-Alice Waters, book's editor, speaks at presentation in Santiago. Cuban Revolution shows how working people "transform themselves in the course of their struggles, becoming human beings capable of achieving what even they never dreamed possible." Above: Socialist worker shows *Our History Is Still Being Written* at April 1 march in New Orleans to demand voting rights for residents displaced by Hurricane Katrina.



Militant/Martin Koppel

making no mention of the hundreds of thousands of Cubans who so proudly proclaim their Chinese ancestry, the article misled readers by flatly reporting that there are only 143 Chinese in the entire population of Havana! The very same "story" was printed a few weeks later in *AsianWeek*, an English-language paper that circulates in the Chinese community in California.

We now find ourselves armed as never before to launch an effective counterattack against such political falsifications as well as organized disinformation! *Our History Is Still Being Written* is a flash of truth, throwing light on a hidden chapter in the history of Our America, on the unacknowledged accomplishments of all nationalities oppressed and formerly enslaved by the ascendant capitalist powers.

Most importantly, it helps open the eyes of those who read it to the truth about the Cuban Revolution today.

As the Beijing reviewer concludes,

the authors convey "an idealism badly needed in a world of materialistic pursuits," adding that "the book may be a history that is 'still being written,' but it has already struck a chord with me."

More than one person of Chinese descent who has been introduced to the book in the last months have expressed surprise that Cubans of Chinese parentage hold such weighty leadership responsibilities in Cuba today. As Sío Wong, Chui, and Choy explain so well in these pages, however, the decisive measure taken to eliminate discrimination against Chinese in Cuba "was the revolution itself." The Chinese community in Cuba is different from anywhere else in the Americas. The difference lies in the organization, triumph, and defense of a socialist revolution.

It is to spread that truth—that need, that real possibility for revolutionists throughout the world—that Pathfinder has published this book.

Sío Wong in Santiago de Cuba

Continued from page 10

economic crisis known as the Special Period, "our people today continue the fight, confronting the so-called Bush plan against Cuba.

Sío Wong was referring to the so-called Commission for Assistance to a Free Cuba appointed by Bush in 2004. The commission outlined plans to "assist" the Cuban people in making a "transition" to a "free" Cuba after the death or incapacitation of President Fidel Castro.

In July 2006 the commission reaffirmed this goal. It called on Washington to step up its economic war against Cuba and increase funding to U.S.-backed "dissidents" organizing to facilitate even more direct U.S. government actions against the Cuban Revolution.

"We are holding neighborhood meetings to discuss the Bush plan," the Cuban general said, "so that people understand its purpose, which is to spread disinformation around the world and to try to annihilate our revolution and make us a colony again.

"The Bush plan," he said, "talks about a 'transition.' Looking around this room, I believe here we have the transition. Here are the combatants; here are the young leaders like Misael [Enamorado, provincial secretary

of the Communist Party] and other compañeros of the leadership. Here are the cadets of the José Maceo military school, the *Camilitos* [students at the Camilo Cienfuegos military high school] who are future officers.

"Who else is going to support this revolution other than the people who've expressed their determination to fight to the last drop of blood?" asked Sío Wong.

"Could there be the type of 'transition' the enemy wants? A real transition has in fact been under way ever since we began to make the revolution in 1959. A transition toward more socialism."

The Santiago meeting, he said, is "a magnificent example, of our people's attitude. And I think you'll report accurately in your newspaper, the *Militant*, about our people's willingness and readiness to struggle. And also about how our history is still being written—with this determination to continue fighting, to continue developing our country and socialism.

"On behalf of the three generals," Sío Wong concluded to applause, "I thank the compañeros present for attending this book launch. And once again I thank our compañeros of Pathfinder for the work they're doing, because they too are writing history."

Trotsky: War, fascism and the U.S. class struggle

Below is an excerpt from Writings of Leon Trotsky [1939–40], one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for November. The 12th of 14 volumes, it contains pamphlets, interviews, articles, letters, and statements to the press written during the Russian revolutionary leader's exile in Mexico from the Soviet Union. The collection covers his writings from 1929 until his assassination at Joseph Stalin's orders in 1940. The excerpt printed

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

here is from a discussion held with Trotsky on Aug. 7, 1940, on a range of questions about the class struggle in the United States. Copyright © 1997 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

LEON TROTSKY

Question: How will the backwardness of the United States working class advance or retard the growth of fascism?

TROTSKY: The backwardness of the United States working class is only a relative term. In many very important respects it is the most progressive



Socialist Workers Party leader Farrell Dobbs with exiled Russian revolutionary Leon Trotsky in Mexico, 1940.

working class of the world: technically, and in its standard of living.

We can look forward now to a change in the economic situation of the United States—a very brusque change, and then when the war comes, to the misery which will follow. Even now, under the program of militarization, with millions upon millions thrown into the war machine, the rapid lowering of the standard of living for the working class will produce a very rapid change of mind in the American workers.

The American worker is very combative—as we have seen during the strikes. They have had the most rebellious strikes in the world. What the American worker misses is a spirit of generalization, or analysis, of his class position in society as a whole. This lack of social thinking has its origin in the country's whole history—the Far West with the perspective of unlimited possibilities for everyone to become rich, etc. Now all that is gone, but the mind remains in the past. Idealists think the

human mentality is progressive, but in reality it is the most conservative element of society. Your technique is progressive but the mentality of the worker lags far behind. Their backwardness consists of their inability to generalize their problem; they consider everything on a personal basis.

Now, the war will teach the American workers social thinking. The economic crisis has already begun and in the CIO we see the first reaction of the workers—confused but important. They begin to feel themselves as a class; they see ten to fourteen millions of unemployed, etc. Now the war will continue to teach them social thinking, and this means revolutionary thinking.

About fascism. In all the countries where fascism became victorious, we had, before the growth of fascism and its victory, a wave of radicalism of the masses; of the workers and the poorer peasants and farmers, and of the petty-bourgeois class. In Italy, after the war and before 1922, we had a revolution-

ary wave of tremendous dimensions; the state was paralyzed, the police did not exist, the trade unions could do anything they wanted—but there was no party capable of taking the power. As a reaction came fascism.

In Germany the same. We had a revolutionary situation in 1918; the bourgeois class did not even ask to participate in the power. The Social Democrats paralyzed the revolution. Then the workers tried again in 1922–23–24. This was the time of the bankruptcy of the Communist Party—all of which we have gone into before. Then in 1929–30–31 the German workers began again a new revolutionary wave. There was a tremendous power in the communists and in the trade unions, but then came the famous policy of social fascism, a policy invented to paralyze the working class. Only after these three tremendous waves, did fascism become a big movement. There are no exceptions to this rule—fascism comes only when the working class shows complete incapacity to take into its own hands the fate of society.

In the United States you will have the same thing. Already there are fascist elements, and they have of course the examples of Italy and Germany. They will therefore work in a more rapid tempo. But you also have the examples of other countries. The next historic waves in the United States will be waves of radicalism of the masses; not fascism. Of course the war can hinder the radicalization for some time but then it will give to the radicalization a more tremendous tempo and swing. The war cannot organically change developments but only retard them for some time—and then give them a push. War, as we have said before, is only the continuation of politics by other means. In this sense, I am sure you will have many possibilities to win the power in the United States before the fascists can become a dominant force.

November

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

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What the Cuban Revolution shows

In its November 15 issue the *Wall Street Journal* published an article speculating about the prospects of Cuba making a "transition" to "free-market" economic policies, that is, toward capitalism. "Cuba could be poised to follow what islanders call the 'Chinese model' of liberalization," it declared.

Despite such bouts of wishful thinking, the U.S. capitalist rulers know there is something fundamentally different about Cuba compared to other countries in the world today. What is it that distinguishes Cuba and its leadership?

Above all, Cuba shows what a socialist revolution can accomplish. Led by the Rebel Army and July 26 Movement, working people not only overthrew a bloody U.S.-backed dictatorship in 1959, but took political power out of the hands of the ruling capitalist families and established a workers and farmers government.

To Washington's amazement, the new revolutionary government could neither be intimidated nor bought off. Every act of imperialist aggression was met by millions of determined workers and farmers who pushed the revolution forward. In this process, ordinary working people have transformed themselves. Cuba's revolutionary leadership has been marked by its efforts to advance the literacy and culture of working people of all ages. It has demonstrated its commitment to combat racial discrimination and promote women's equality. It has stood by its guarantee to farmers that they can work the land free from debt slavery or threat of eviction.

Acting as citizens of the world, Cubans have joined in anti-imperialist struggles around the globe, from Congo to Bolivia to Syria. Some 300,000 served in Angola alone, helping defeat invasions by the racist regime in South Africa and contributing to its overthrow. Today, tens of thousands of Cuban health-care personnel provide competent, dignified medical care in some of the

most remote regions of Africa and Latin America.

Cuba's course of working-class cooperation and solidarity is in stark contrast to the dog-eat-dog reality of capitalism in the United States and elsewhere. In today's world of imperialist wars abroad and the employers' drive against living standards and job conditions at home, the Cuban Revolution points a road forward for working people everywhere.

That is why the billionaire rulers of the United States and other countries are bent on undermining and overthrowing the Cuban Revolution. They have failed in their efforts, however, not only to militarily destroy the revolution but to find any wing of the government or the armed forces that can be corrupted toward a pro-capitalist course.

Unlike the wannabe capitalists of the bureaucratic castes and Stalinist parties that dominate the former Soviet Union, China, and other workers states, Cuba has a leadership that for five decades has looked to the mobilization and organization of working people.

These divergent courses are graphically illustrated in Africa. In Zambia, copper miners recently rebelled against the starvation wages, dangerous conditions, and seven-day workweeks they face in mines owned by profit-hungry Chinese state companies. In contrast, many in Africa know that Cuban internationalists have given their lives to African liberation struggles without taking anything in return.

The *Wall Street Journal* editors and their ilk are incapable of understanding why the Cuban Revolution does not take the so-called Chinese model or any "transition" toward capitalist exploitation. But for workers and farmers around the world, Cuba shows what we are capable of accomplishing if we organize our potential power and chart a course to make a revolution and join the worldwide struggle for socialism.

Missile attack inside Pakistan sparks protests

Continued from front page

this region, where forces backing the Taliban and al-Qaeda are influential.

Officials in both Washington and Islamabad denied U.S. involvement in the missile attack. Pakistani officials, the Associated Press reported, insisted the strike came from their own military, although they did say it was conducted on the basis of U.S. intelligence.

Government officials said Pakistani helicopters fired five missiles on the school. Some eyewitnesses, however, said the missiles were fired from a U.S. unmanned drone, according to AP.

The target of the attack was reportedly al-Qaeda's second-ranking leader, Ayman al-Zawahiri.

In January missiles fired from a U.S. drone hit another border town in a similar attempt to kill al-Zawahiri.

In a related development, a report by the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board said the number of attacks in Afghanistan by Taliban supporters against the Afghan government and NATO forces rose from 300 a month in March to 600 in September. So far this

year 3,700 people have been killed in the fighting.

On November 8 a suicide bomber detonated his explosives on a military training ground in northwest Pakistan, killing at least 42 army recruits, government officials reported.

Washington has stepped up pressure on Pakistan to help more in the fighting Taliban and al-Qaeda supporters along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border.

Top military officials from NATO, Afghanistan, and Pakistan met in Kabul November 11 to review plans for a joint center to share intelligence in the "war on terror," Agence France-Presse reported.

The Musharraf government, a former protector of the Taliban-led regime in Afghanistan before it was routed in the 2001 U.S. invasion, has been transformed into an unstable but staunch U.S. strategic ally in the region. Last year the Pakistani government received about \$1.1 billion in "logistical" aid for the "war against terrorism," according to a recent report by the Asian Development Bank. Over the past three years Islamabad has received about \$3.7 billion in U.S. funds for such operations.

LETTERS

Susan B. Anthony

Readers of the *Militant* might be interested to know that anti-abortion forces are trying to claim the legacy of Susan B. Anthony, a leader of the 19th century suffrage and women's rights movements. The Susan B. Anthony List, for example, is an anti-choice political action committee in Alexandria, Virginia. Recently a member of Feminists for Life purchased Anthony's birthplace in Adams, Massachusetts, with the stated intent of making it open to the public.

The shaky, at best, argument that Anthony was anti-abortion is based on a few quotes taken out of context and attributed to her because they appeared in the publication she edited. The view of scholars most

familiar with her work is that she carefully avoided the issue, given the political environment at the time and the feminists' priorities of suffrage and other democratic reforms. We do know that she stood firmly for separation of church and state and the right of women to control their own destinies.

Mindy Brudno
Albany, New York

Chicano struggle

I want to recommend to all readers, friends, and coworkers the movie *Walkout*, which portrays the fight by Chicano students in East Los Angeles in 1968. The movie, shown on HBO, was produced by Edward James Olmos. It contains footage of the real

events and people involved. The pages of the Pathfinder book *The Politics of Chicano Liberation* come to life and were created by the heroism of these students. It should be noted that this year's massive immigrant rights marches and student walkouts were built upon these struggles in the late 60's. Viva la Raza!

Robert Robertson
Bloomfield, New Jersey

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of interest to working people. Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.

Goodyear strikers

Continued from front page

in a busload of 100 scabs into the plant each day. "So far they haven't been very productive. They've destroyed more tires than they've produced," he said.

One of the key reasons pickets said they walked off the job was the bosses' demand to cut health benefits for retirees. "They're on a fixed income and can't work any overtime like we can to make up for less benefits," Elkins said. "I'm striking for them, but that's my future too because one day I will be a retiree."

Strikers described how the employers cried bankruptcy three years ago and demanded that workers at the Gadsden plant swallow concessions, including taking away two years of their retirement. Now workers who retire after 30 years, receive retirement pay based only on 28 years of service.

"In 2003 when the company claimed it was about to go bankrupt, they wanted us to give up COLA [cost-of-living adjustment], make payments on medical benefits, give up two years of service, and give up other concessions," said union member Buddy Rawls.

"Well, things got better for the company but we never got our two years back, and now we make payments on health insurance."

Now the bosses are pushing to eliminate the cost-of-living increases as a way of making the workers pay for health benefits, strikers explained. "We started giving up concessions in 1984 and every contract proposed since then has been what we're going to give up, not what we're going to get. They keep demanding cuts. It's nothing but corporate greed," Rawls said.

He pointed to other company moves to boost its profits at the expense of workers in the plant, including eliminating jobs of supervisors by dubbing hourly employees "leads" and making them take over supervisory responsibilities. "They also combined jobs when some workers retired and never replaced them," Rawls said.

In 1999 Goodyear bought 75 percent of Sumitomo Industries of Japan, which owned Dunlop Tires, Goodyear's top competitor in the United States. The company made this move to strengthen its position in markets overseas, workers on the picket line noted. Then in 2003 Goodyear closed the Dunlop plant in Huntsville Alabama, affecting 1,100 hourly and salaried employees there.



BY JOHN STEELE

TORONTO—"If they had offered us the status quo in the beginning instead of demands for concessions, we probably would have taken it," said Goodyear striker Tyler Froman on the picket line November 11. "But now I won't go back unless we get back at least what we have lost so far and more."

Froman said his view was the most general view among the 60 strikers at the Goodyear warehouse and tire retread facilities on the west side of Toronto.

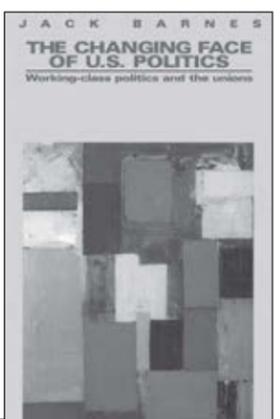
Even though they are hoping something will come of the renewed talks, strikers are preparing for a long strike if necessary. They have built shelters at picket lines and piled up a large supply of wood to burn in the burn barrels to keep warm in the winter weather that is coming.

Meanwhile the bosses, using management and temporary workers, continue to truck tires out of the plant to supply Wal-Mart, Canadian Tire, and the auto assembly industry.

The Changing Face of U.S. Politics: Working-Class Politics and the Unions

By Jack Barnes

A HANDBOOK for the generations of workers coming into the factories, mines and mills, it aims to show why only the working class can lead humanity out of the social crisis endemic to capitalism in its decline. It shows how millions of workers, as political resistance grows, will revolutionize themselves, their unions and all of society. \$23



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