

Drive draws readers into working-class politics

BY EMMA JOHNSON

The campaign to expand the long-term readership of the *Militant* and get books on revolutionary working-class politics into workers' hands is going well. Through the second week 202 have either renewed or signed up for new six-month or longer subscriptions. The goal is to get 575 by March 23. This week, Miami became the first area to raise its quota.

Supporters of the *Militant* are bringing the paper to picket lines, social protests and political events to join the discussions and sign up new readers. And they are bringing these experiences to readers as they knock on their doors to talk about working-class politics and encourage them to renew their subscriptions.

Supporters of the paper in New York took part in a Feb. 24 rally that drew hundreds in support of the protest movement that brought down the government in Ukraine. "It was fun

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From Iowa to W.Va., profit drive threatens land and labor

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Each week brings news of new industrial "accidents" and the consequences of the bosses' profit drive for working people on the job and those who live nearby.

An explosion in a fertilizer storage warehouse in Northwood, Iowa, near the Minnesota border, led to the evacuation of the town's 2,000 residents Feb. 20. Plumes of smoke saturated with sulfuric acid and other chemicals hovered over the town as a result of the 7:30 a.m. fire at Northwood AG Products, in the city's airport.

"The cops came to my house at 9:30 and told me I had to leave," Dennis Lau told the *Mason City Globe Gazette*.

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Industrial 'accidents' pose need to fight for workers control
— editorial p. 7

Popular mobilizations topple Ukrainian gov't

Seek political rights, break from Moscow's grip



Reuters/Vasily Fedosenko

Protesters in Kiev, Ukraine, rally by national parliament building Feb. 22. Popular demonstrations and street actions since November led to overthrow of President Viktor Yanukovich.

BY JOHN STUDER

The regime of Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich has been overthrown following three months of mass mobilizations and clashes with

government forces. The tyrant fled Feb. 22 as hundreds of thousands took to the streets, made more determined by a bloody crackdown days earlier.

"People really changed their mindset because of these events," Roman Dakus, who had participated in protests against the regime for three months, told the *New York Times*. "Before, people thought, 'Nothing re-

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UK meeting launches art exhibit for Cuban 5, builds London event



Militant/Paul Davies

Some 70 people attended Feb. 15 meeting in Manchester, England, in defense of Cuban Five. Inset, participants view exhibit "I Will Die the Way I've Lived," watercolors by Antonio Guerrero, one of Five, on display at event.

BY CAROLINE BELLAMY

MANCHESTER, England — Seventy people participated in a meeting organized by the Cuba Solidarity Campaign here to help build the International Commission of Inquiry into the case of the Cuban Five that will take place at the Law Society in London March 7-8.

Held Feb. 15 at the Central Hall, the meeting included a panel of speakers and — for the first time in the United

Kingdom — an exhibition of "I Will Die the Way I've Lived." Through a series of 15 watercolors, Antonio Guerrero depicts the experiences he and his four comrades shared during their first 17 months of incarceration, a time spent in the "hole" at the Federal Detention Center in Miami.

Panel speaker Father Geoff Bottoms, a leader of the Cuba Solidarity Campaign, talked about visiting three

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What's behind vote against UAW at Tenn. auto plant?

BY EMMA JOHNSON

Workers at Volkswagen's Chattanooga, Tenn., plant voted down representation by the United Auto Workers 712 to 626 in a secret ballot election Feb. 12-14. Contrary to the gleeful assertions of the *Wall Street Journal* and the moans of defeat from UAW officials, the results do not mean a historic blow has been

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'Militant' Renewal Drive Feb. 8 - March 23 (week 2)			
Country	Quota	Sold	%
UNITED STATES			
San Francisco	40	21	53%
Miami*	25	13	52%
Chicago	37	15	41%
Seattle	37	15	41%
Atlanta	35	14	40%
Des Moines	30	12	40%
Lincoln	5	2	40%
Houston	25	9	36%
Omaha	30	9	30%
Philadelphia	30	9	30%
Los Angeles	35	10	29%
New York	90	21	23%
Boston	13	3	23%
Washington	18	4	22%
Twin Cities	35	5	14%
Total U.S.	485	162	33%
PRISONERS	8	5	63%
UNITED KINGDOM			
London	30	7	23%
Manchester	20	6	30%
UK Total	50	13	26%
CANADA	32	7	22%
NEW ZEALAND	18	8	44%
AUSTRALIA	20	7	35%
Total	613	202	35%
Should be	575	192	33%

Threats to land and labor

Continued from front page
zette. “We didn’t know what was going on. They just told us to get out of town as fast as we could.” The evacuation lasted through late afternoon.

In southern West Virginia, working people are still dealing with the consequences of a Jan. 9 chemical leak from Freedom Industries. Use of tap water was banned for up to 10 days for 300,000 people in nine counties.

“Once they lifted the ban, we went ahead and showered but we still don’t drink the water,” Bentley Kirk, a surface miner from Madison in Boone County, told the *Militant* in a phone interview Feb. 23. “For a while bottle water was supplied to us. We now have to buy it ourselves.”

Up to 7,500 gallons of 4-methylcyclohexane methanol (MCHM), which separates coal from waste material, was dumped into the Elk River, a mile upstream of intake pipes for the West Virginia American Water Company, just outside Charleston, the state capital.

Freedom Industries’ storage tanks were half a century old. An October 2013 inspection found the tanks failed to meet federal safety standards. The tank containing MCHM wasn’t even inspected by the private company conducting the review, the *Wall Street Journal* said Feb. 10, because the Environmental Protection Agency considers the substance to be “nonhazardous.”

On Jan. 18, the same day state officials and the water company gave the go-ahead to drink the water in all counties, high levels of the chemical were detected in a half dozen schools in the Charleston area. Three weeks later a teacher and several students at Riverside High School were taken to the hospi-

tal after they collapsed from inhaling strong fumes, with MCHM’s characteristic licorice odor, coming out of the water faucet.

During the water ban “we sent our kids to stay with family in Kentucky,” said Kirk, “but my wife and I work so we had to stay here and tough it out.”

This situation “has had a lingering effect,” Kirk said. “You can’t get anybody to say you can drink the water but they say you can wash clothes in it. They said chemical levels were so low they weren’t registering, but they’re still flushing the water lines.”

Freedom Industries filed for bankruptcy eight days after the leak occurred. A month later the company announced plans to entirely shut down its operations.

In North Carolina, a pipe running under a coal ash pond collapsed Feb. 2 at a closed power plant owned by Duke Energy. Over the next week up to 82,000 tons of coal ash mixed with 27 million gallons of water gushed into the Dan River, which runs between North Carolina and Virginia. Coal ash is a by-product of burning coal to produce electricity.

While a company spokesperson told the *Los Angeles Times* that municipal water supplies downstream had not been affected, the state Department of Health and Human Services is warning people not to eat fish from the area.

In Kentucky, a natural gas pipeline exploded Feb. 13 in Knifley, about 90 miles south of Louisville. The 1 a.m. blast set three houses ablaze, destroying two of them, and forced residents of 20 houses to evacuate.

The “30-inch pipeline supplies some of the fuel used to heat millions of

NY vigil protests SKorea gov’t attacks on political rights



Eric Chon

NEW YORK — Some 50 people attended a vigil here Feb. 21, protesting the South Korean government’s attacks on unions and political opponents and demanding the resignation of President Park Geun-hye.

In a blow to political rights and the right to free speech, seven members of the United Progressive Party were framed up and convicted Feb. 17 on charges of plotting an insurrection and violating the National Security Law. The National Intelligence Service, South Korea’s central spy agency, filed the charges. Lee Seok-ki, a member of the National Assembly, was sentenced to 12 years in prison and a 10-year ban on running for office. Six other party members received sentences ranging from four to seven years.

During a rail workers’ strike in December, the government declared the strike illegal, issued arrest warrants for strike leaders, raided union headquarters and threatened hundreds with firings.

The protest, organized by the New York Overseas Korean Emergency Committee, was the eighth in the last six months.

— EMMA JOHNSON

homes and businesses in the Northeast and Midwest,” reported Reuters.

That same day, a Norfolk Southern Corp. train carrying crude oil derailed in western Pennsylvania. Similar recent incidents have caused explosive fires, although none was reported this time.

Capitalism advances the growth of humanity’s wealth only “by simultaneously undermining the original sources of all wealth — the soil and the worker,” Karl Marx, a founding leader of the communist movement, noted in 1867. This observation is more urgent today.

“Environmental pollution is a social question, a class question. Workers must not fall into accepting the common view that the environment — any more than ‘education’ — is a ‘scientific’ question, a ‘natural’ question, that somehow hovers above classes and outside the class struggle. ... The workers movement has to explain the source of ecological destruction and why the answer lies along the revolutionary line of march of the working class.”

— Jack Barnes from *Capitalism’s World Disorder*
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Militant/Betsey Stone

Supporters of California prisoners protest solitary confinement Feb. 11 in Sacramento.

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

‘Militant’ renewal drive

Continued from front page

to be there,” said Dan Fein. “Some people asked, ‘So you’re a communist, why are you here?’ I explained that the *Militant* and the Socialist Workers Party support the freedom struggle in Ukraine and oppose Russian domination. ‘I like that,’ one said as he read the masthead — a socialist newsweekly published in the interests of working people.”

Supporters sold 71 copies of recent issues of the paper. Three participants signed up for introductory subscriptions.

New York supporters also attended a Feb. 21 rally protesting political repression in South Korea and a meeting that same evening celebrating the life and contributions of Malcolm X at the Malcolm X & Dr. Betty Shabazz Memorial and Educational Center. The center carries a number of Pathfinder Press titles by Malcolm X. *Militant* supporters joined in selling these books at the meeting. In addition, they sold three copies of *I Will Die the Way I’ve Lived*, two copies of *Voices From Prison: The Cuban Five* and one copy of *We Are Heirs of the World’s Revolutions* by Thomas Sankara, one of 10 books on special offer with a subscription (see ad below). Two participants signed up for *Militant* subscriptions.

I Will Die the Way I’ve Lived, 15 watercolor prison paintings by Antonio Guerrero, and *Voices From Prison* are powerful new tools in the fight to free the Cuban Five, including finding others interested in attending and building

showings of Guerrero’s watercolors.

At a Feb. 11 protest in Sacramento, Calif., in solidarity with the prisoners who went on a hunger strike last summer demanding an end to solitary confinement, Brenda Cheatham, mother of one of the hunger strikers at Pelican Bay State prison, signed up for an introductory subscription, wrote Joel Britton from San Francisco.

Another participant in the protest, a former prisoner who recently resubscribed, purchased *I Will Die the Way I’ve Lived* and *Voices From Prison*. Since the books came out, supporters in San Francisco have sold 41 copies of *I Will Die the Way I’ve Lived* and 28 of *Voices From Prison*, many to those who had never heard about the Cuban Five.

“We find that the paintings by Antonio Guerrero, illustrating the experiences of the Cuban Five while imprisoned in Florida, have a big impact on former prisoners and family members of prisoners who are familiar with prison conditions,” Britton wrote.

Supporters in San Francisco stand at 20 renewals and one new six-month subscription.

“A door-to-door team to Santa Rosa, Calif., where middle and high school students have been protesting the cop killing last October of 13-year-old Andy Lopez, signed up two workers for introductory subs, another for a renewal and a fourth — a home care worker from Fiji who hadn’t seen the paper — for a six-month subscription,” Britton wrote.

“After knocking on her door, an assistant teacher showed us artworks her uncle is painting in jail,” reported Jacquie Henderson from Omaha, Neb. “She is among several readers who said they want to help build a showing of Anto-



Militant/Janice Lynn

Luvia Ortega, left, who works in shipping at a plastics factory, renews *Militant* subscription after discussion at her house in Stockbridge, Ga., Feb. 23 with Susan LaMont.

nio’s watercolors at a prominent gallery here in June.”

A man from the Ivory Coast who lives in Longueuil, south of Montreal, has been getting French-language articles from the *Militant*. “When we went to his place Feb. 23, three of his friends were there,” wrote John Steele from Montreal. “We had a wide-ranging discussion on world politics, what is communism, Cuba, the Cuban Five, etc. He bought the French-language edition of *We Are Heirs of the World’s Revolutions*.”

Supporters in Atlanta are off to a good start. They have sold 14 renewals out of a goal of 35. On Feb. 16, a team visited a mobile home community in Mableton, Ga., where 17 subscribers live, reported Rachele Fruit.

Mario Cardenas told the team that through the pages of the *Militant* he follows the struggle of the Kellogg workers in Memphis, Tenn., who were locked out by the company in October. “What happened to them is an injustice,” he said. Cardenas, who works as a roofer

and came to Atlanta from Mexico five years ago, renewed his subscription and bought the Spanish-language edition of *Voices From Prison*.

To renew, get a subscription or join the drive, contact a distributor listed on page 6 or the *Militant* at (212) 244-4899.

‘I Will Die the Way I’ve Lived’: New book for fighters to free the Cuban Five

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Showings of paintings by Antonio Guerrero, one of the Cuban Five

I Will Die the Way I’ve Lived



Exhibits

Los Angeles March 2-30

Opening reception: Sun., March 2, 2PM. Coffee and Crepes, 4545 Cesar Chavez Ave. Tel.: (323) 263-4544; (323) 661-1980. Exhibition schedule: Tues.-Thurs., 10AM-4PM; Fri.-Sat., 12PM-8PM.

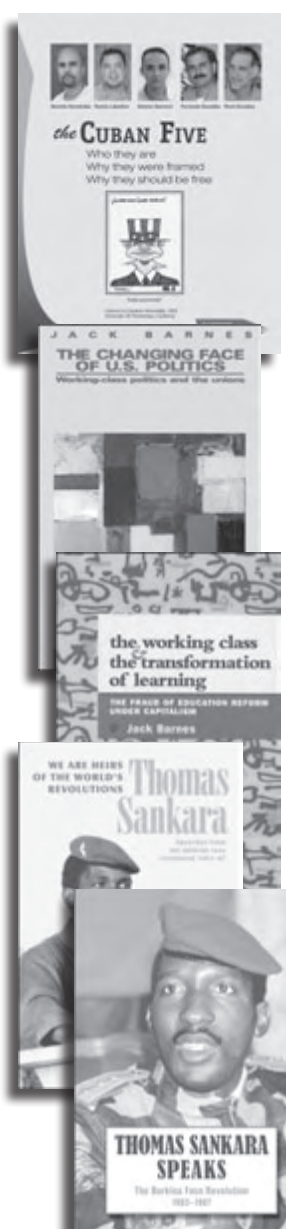
Chicago March 21-April 13

Opening reception: Sat., March 22, 7-9PM. Beverly Arts Center, 2407 W. 111th St. Tel.: (773) 445-3838. Exhibition schedule: Mon.-Fri., 9AM-9PM (closes at 5 p.m. if no evening event); Sat., 12PM-5PM.; Sun., 1-4PM.

Philadelphia Fri., March 21

Reception: 7 p.m. Exhibition: 7-9 p.m. Imperfect Gallery, 5601 Greene St. (Germantown) Tel.: (917) 957-4504, imperfectgallery.com

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**See distributors
on page 6**



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by Jack Barnes
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by Nelson Mandela, Fidel Castro, Raúl Castro; Cuban generals; Gabriel García Márquez
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The Making of a Revolution Within the Revolution
by Vilma Espín, Asela de los Santos, Yolanda Ferrer
 \$10 with subscription (regular \$20)

Women and Revolution

The Living Example of the Cuban Revolution
by Asela de los Santos, Mary-Alice Waters and others
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Los cosméticos, las modas, y la explotación de la mujer

(Cosmetics, Fashions, and the Exploitation of Women)
by Joseph Hansen, Evelyn Reed, Mary-Alice Waters
 \$10 with subscription (regular \$15)

‘René opened my eyes to what really exists in world’

Miami Militant Labor Forum: ‘Free Cuban Five!’

BY DEAN HAZLEWOOD

MIAMI — “I learned a lot from René González about my country. Now even some of my family and friends call me a communist, they say I was brain-washed,” Rodolfo “Roddy” Rodríguez told participants in the Militant Labor Forum here Feb. 15. “He didn’t wash my brain, he opened my eyes to see what really exists in this world today.”

Rodríguez, who came to know González while they were both in federal prison in Marianna, Fla., was speaking on a panel about the case of the Cuban Five. The new book *Voices From Prison: The Cuban Five* includes an interview with him.

Also on the panel was Enrique Rodríguez, a member of the Alianza Martiana, an organization of Cuban-Americans who oppose Washington’s hostile policy toward Cuba and its socialist revolution. He described decades of bombings, sabotage and assassinations carried out against Cuba since the 1959 revolution by rightist paramilitary groups operating from U.S. soil, with support from Washington.

In the 1990s the Cuban government assigned a group of men to monitor and penetrate such organizations. Among them were René González, Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labaniño, Antonio Guerrero, and Fernando González. “The five were part of a larger group,” Enrique Rodríguez said, “but they were the ones who didn’t break after their arrest.”

Naomi Craine of the Socialist Workers Party spoke about the “character and integrity of the Five and what this tells us about the Cuban Revolution, and the men and women who are part of it. And why the fight to free them is part of the fight of the working class, here in the U.S. and around the world, to build the solidarity, confidence and leadership it will take to put an end to the dictatorship of capital.”

Roddy Rodríguez talked about how René González respected his fellow prisoners. “I’m a Christian and a pastor. He’s a man from Cuba with socialist ideals. But I noticed those who had non-socialist ideals, like I used to, were less

tolerant” than González. “He never tried to impose his thinking on me or anyone else. But if you asked his opinion he would tell you.”

He described how he responds now to the endless negative propaganda against the Cuban Revolution. “They say there’s no food in Cuba. I say, ‘Wow, Cubans must be supernatural. There’s no food, so we eat stones. There must be a lot of protein in those stones!’”

“I thank God that all these things I can share with you today I learned through René,” Rodríguez concluded.

A participant asked about the 2012

Continued on page 5



Militant Labor Forum in Miami Feb. 15 discusses fight to free Cuban Five. From left, Enrique Rodríguez of Alianza Martiana, Naomi Craine, Rodolfo Rodríguez, translator Victor Nieto.

Manchester Cuban 5 meeting builds London event

Continued from front page

of the five revolutionaries in U.S. prisons, pointing to their resilience, dignity and strength of purpose. He asked Ramón Labaniño what he thought about during the many hours of solitary confinement imposed on the Five.

“I think about the history of my people,” came the answer “and that keeps me going. The history of resistance.” Pointing to a picture of a million-strong march to celebrate May Day in Havana, he said, “That is my people and they are why I’m here.”

“I see the Commission of Inquiry as a springboard for greater international activity,” said Bottoms, “the ball may bounce in London but it must land in Washington.”

“This is part of a war against the Cuban people orchestrated by the most powerful nation in the world,” said Paul Foley, northwest regional officer of the Unison trade union.

“This is about Cuba, not the law,” said John Nicholson, former deputy leader of Manchester City Council and a barrister, who spoke about facets of the U.S. government frame-up. “This was never just a legal case, it’s a political one. That is why to win we need to speak to the jury of the millions.”

Nicholson urged participants to spend some time looking at Guerrero’s paintings, and recommended “two very good

books I’ve acquired — *Voices From Prison: The Cuban Five* and *I Will Die the Way I’ve Lived*.”

Both he and Foley promoted the Commission of Inquiry.

Participants bought eight copies of *Voices From Prison* and 13 of *I Will Die the Way I’ve Lived*. The latter includes reproductions of the 15 paintings with descriptions by Guerrero and other comments by Gerardo Hernández and Labaniño. Both are new books published by Pathfinder Press.

“The Cuban Revolution was from the start built on solidarity,” said Irelia López, first secretary at the Cuban Embassy in London, in her presentation. “People from all backgrounds actively participated in building a better world. These

five men are heroes for our people, for their integrity, their dignity, they are people prepared to do anything to protect us from attack. I am here today to request solidarity, in spreading the word about the case of the Cuban Five.”

“At the commission,” said López, “international figures will show the interest of the world in these five heroes to my country.”

The two-day Commission of Inquiry will feature testimony and presentations by prominent jurists from around the world; representatives of Amnesty International; victims of attacks by the rightist paramilitary groups, such as those the Five were monitoring; family of the Five; legislators; academics; author Alice Walker; Cuban officials; René González, the one member of the Five out of prison; and others.

“I like the one with the envelope and the string,” participant Omar Mohamed, told the *Militant* about Guerrero’s exhibit. “Even when it was very difficult they managed to communicate with each other.”

“I’m absolutely impressed,” said Amanda McCracken. “They haven’t lost their humor. How are they so resilient after such a long time fighting for their rights?” McCracken, who helped staff a table for the Joint Enterprise Not Guilty by Association (JENGbA) campaign, said her son Gerard Childs was imprisoned last December and “I know how down he gets sometimes.”

Childs was convicted of murder under England’s 300-year-old “joint en-

terprise” law, under which people are found guilty and sentenced for violent crimes if they supposedly “encouraged” another to carry it out.

“It’s like the conspiracy charges the Five faced, you don’t have to commit an act, just be associated with others who allegedly do,” said Janet Cunliffe, whose partially blind son is serving 12 years for a joint enterprise conviction.

The Justice4Grainger campaign, which is fighting to prosecute the cops who shot dead unarmed 36-year-old Anthony Grainger in 2012, brought their banners and literature to the event.

“It is about unity,” said Wesley Ahmed, Grainger’s cousin and leader of Justice4Grainger, when asked about his impression of the event. “We are crying out for unity; the Five are crying out for unity — to be able to fight.”

In addition to JENGbA and Justice-4Grainger, several other groups had tables, reflecting the breadth of support for the event, including the Cuba Solidarity Campaign; the Communist League; the *Morning Star*, a daily whose editorial line follows the program of the Communist Party; and the Palestine Solidarity Campaign.

“I know what prison cells are like,” said Brian Oreggio, a meat factory worker who has been helping organizing a showing of Guerrero’s paintings at the Moston Miners Community Arts and Music Centre. “I’ve been incarcerated, but not under the conditions they faced. I empathize with them, they’re strong people.”

International Commission of Inquiry into the Case of the Cuban Five

London, March 7-8 The Law Society, 113 Chancery Lane

March 7-8, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Testimony by René González, released member of the Cuban Five; family members of the Five; victims of attacks by Cuban rightist paramilitary groups based in the U.S.; legal team for the Five; Amnesty International.

March 7, 7:30 p.m. Voices for Cuba Concert with Eliades Ochoa, Omara Portuondo, others. Speakers include René González, and Alice Walker. *Barbican Centre, Silk Street.*

March 8, 7:30 p.m. Farewell dinner. Speakers: René González, Ricardo Alarcón, Alice Walker. Showing of “I Will Die the Way I’ve Lived,” watercolors by Antonio Guerrero, one of the Five. *Trades Union Congress, Congress House, Great Russell Street.*

See **www.voicesforthe five.com** for more details about tickets and venues. Advanced booking is required.

Voices From Prison: The Cuban Five



The unbending dignity and integrity of the Cuban Five has won them the respect of thousands around the world as well as fellow prisoners. Here three who have known them behind bars speak out. Also accounts of prison life and resistance by Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labaniño, Elizabeth Palmeiro and Puerto Rican independence fighter Rafael Cancel Miranda. Also in Spanish.

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‘I Will Die the Way I’ve Lived’

Fifteen watercolors by Antonio Guerrero for the 15th anniversary of the imprisonment of the Cuban Five. With text by Guerrero, Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labaniño. Also in Spanish.

\$7. Special publication offer \$5

pathfinderpress.com

Pussy Riot slams Putin at Sochi, unbowed in face of cop attacks

BY JOHN STUDER

Nadezhda Tolokonnikova, Maria Alyokhina and other members of Pussy Riot — who have become symbols of resistance to political repression in Russia — organized protests outside the Winter Olympics in Sochi, standing up to arrests, assaults and intimidation by cops and paramilitary thugs.

Tolokonnikova and Alyokhina spent nearly two years in Russian gulags on charges of “hooliganism” for a punk rock performance protesting the regime of President Vladimir Putin. Released in December, the two came to New York in early February where they spoke at a concert sponsored by Amnesty International and promoted the fight for political rights in Russia and the rights of prisoners worldwide.

From the moment Tolokonnikova and Alyokhina arrived in Sochi Feb. 16 they were closely watched by government agents. They were arrested and held for seven hours that day and 10 hours the next.

On Feb. 18 Tolokonnikova, Alyokhina and other members of Pussy Riot were shoved into a van by cops and paramilitary Cossacks and taken to a police station near Olympic Park.

“Dragged into the investigator’s office along the stairway,” Alyokhina said in a statement. “Everyone has bruises.”

When they were released, they marched out singing with their heads covered with brightly colored balaclavas.

Tens of thousands of cops and some 400 registered Cossacks were deployed for the Olympics. Cossacks — used as cavalry forces and drawn from nomadic tribes under the czarist empire — were barred from military organization after the 1917 Russian Revolution. They were resurrected in 1936 under the anti-working-class regime of Joseph Stalin and used as a paramilitary force ever since.

In 2012 Cossack units were introduced into Krasnodar Krai province, where Sochi is located, to be used against Muslim immigrants. “We will stamp it out, instill order,” Aleksandr Tkachev, the region’s governor, told local cops. “What you can’t do, the Cossacks can.”

On Feb. 19, as Pussy Riot began performing and filming “Putin Will Teach You to Love the Motherland” in Sochi, they were attacked by uniformed Cossacks and plainclothes cops. They were knocked to the ground, pepper sprayed and beaten with a horsewhip.



Reuters/Eric Gaillard

Members of Pussy Riot, including Maria Alyokhina and Nadezhda Tolokonnikova, leave police station Feb. 18 in Adler, Russia, near Sochi Olympics, after being roughed up and detained.

After some band members were treated at local hospitals, Pussy Riot restaged and taped their performance under the Olympic rings outside Sochi’s city hall.

Tolokonnikova, Alyokhina and other Pussy Riot members wearing balaclavas held a press conference Feb. 20 to release the video.

“The Olympics has created an environment of sweeping violations of human rights in Russia,” Tolokonnikova told the press. “We are banned from speaking out here.”

Their song points to the over \$50 billion spent on the Olympics. “Sochi is blocked. Olympus is under surveillance. Special forces, weapons, crowds of cops,” they sing.

The song chronicles government frame-ups, including dozens imprisoned for participating in an anti-Putin rally in Moscow’s Bolotnaya Square in 2012; environmental activist Yevgeny Vitishko, jailed for opposing damage to forestland around Sochi in preparations for the games; defenders of gay rights; and others.

“The verdict for Russia is jail for six years,” they sing, referring to Putin’s presidential term. “They’ll teach you to submit and cry in the camps. Fireworks for the bosses.”

“The most honest people in our country are currently in jail as defendants in the Bolotnaya Square case,” Alyokhina wrote in an op-ed in the Feb. 21 *New York Times*. “They came to the Moscow Square on May 6, 2012, to join a protest against fraud in the presidential elections, and they chanted, ‘Putin, get out!’ They were beaten with truncheons by riot police officers, arrested, jailed and put on trial.”

Alyokhina and Tolokonnikova flew from Sochi to Moscow to join hundreds in a protest outside the Feb. 21 court hearing where eight of the Bolotnaya Square demonstrators were convicted on a range of trumped-up charges. On Feb. 25 the court meted out sentences ranging from two and a half to four years in prison to seven of the accused.

‘René opened my eyes to world’

Continued from page 4

arson attack at Airline Brokers, a Miami travel agency that organizes trips to Cuba. “To this day the FBI says they can’t find the culprits,” said Enrique Rodríguez.

“I know why they haven’t found them,” Roddy Rodríguez added. “They were never lost.”

A lot of the discussion centered on how to work together to defend the Five. “We should organize a picket or demonstration in favor of the Five, to get outside the four walls,” suggested Enrique Rodríguez.

“We do need public activities as part of a broad education campaign,” said Craine. “The exhibits being organized

with Antonio Guerrero’s paintings are an excellent way for more people to learn about the case.” (See ad page 3.)

Craine also talked about how supporters of the *Militant* “find a lot of receptivity among working people going door to door with the *Militant* and books on the Five like *Voices From Prison* and *I Will Die the Way I’ve Lived*.”

About 20 people attended. “It’s clearly an injustice, and I want to do my part to help it be better known,” said Gloria Gilmore, who like several others was just learning about the Five. She subscribed to the *Militant* and bought copies of *The Cuban Five: Who They Are, Why They Were Framed, Why They Should Be Free* and *Voices From Prison*.

Who are the Cuban Five?



Fernando González, Gerardo Hernández, Antonio Guerrero, Ramón Labañino and René González are Cuban revolutionaries who during the 1990s accepted assignments from the Cuban government to gather information on the operations and plans of Cuban-American paramilitary groups based in southern Florida. These rightist outfits, organizing on U.S. soil with virtual impunity, have a long record of carrying out bombings, assassinations and other deadly attacks, both against targets in Cuba and supporters of the Cuban Revolution in the United States, Puerto Rico and elsewhere.

On Sept. 12, 1998, the five were arrested by the FBI. They were framed up and convicted on a variety of charges, which included acting as unregistered agents of the Cuban government and possession of false identity documents. Without a shred of evidence, three were charged with “conspiracy to gather and transmit national defense information.”

Hernández was also convicted of conspiracy to commit murder, based on the pretext that he bore responsibility for the Cuban government’s 1996 shoot-down of two Brothers to the Rescue aircraft that had invaded Cuban airspace in disregard of Havana’s repeated warnings. He is serving two life terms plus 15 years. His wife Adriana Pérez is barred from entering the United States.

René González returned to Cuba in May 2013, halfway through his parole. Fernando González is scheduled to be released Feb. 27.

Australia construction workers walk out over co-worker’s death

BY LINDA HARRIS AND RON POULSEN

SYDNEY — Five hundred building workers, members of the Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union, walked off the job Jan. 9 at the Barangaroo construction site on Sydney Harbour to protest the death of one of their co-workers — a 26-year-old trainee who was unsupervised when he fell 30 meters (100 feet) from scaffolding.

The young man, whose name has not been released, enrolled in a training program for young Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders two weeks earlier.

Construction is among the industries in Australia with the highest rates of injuries and deaths, accounting for more than 10 percent of workers killed on the job. The bosses’ drive for profit killed 19 construction workers last year; 25 the year before.

After the accident, police closed off the site as a “crime scene,” refusing entry to the union and government safety officials.

Meanwhile, the CFMEU has been under attack by the capitalist media and Liberal government through a slander campaign, legal probes and anti-union legislation.

On Jan. 28 the *Sydney Morning Herald* ran a story headlined “Bribery, Dirty Deals Rife in Building Industry” that claimed union officials were accepting company bribes to win contracts. The

“evidence” uncovered by a joint investigation by the *Herald* and ABC’s 7.30 TV program, included tapped conversations, bank records and police files.

Prime Minister Anthony Abbott is setting up a royal commission — a judicial inquiry with far-reaching powers — to probe the finances of the CFMEU and other unions.

Abbott has also called for the reinstatement of the Australian Building and Construction Commission, with increased powers and funding to re-establish “a strong cop on the beat.”

Set up in 2005, the ABCC was given sweeping powers to interrogate construction workers and union representatives, with threats of imprisonment for not snitching. In 2012 the Labor government replaced the ABCC with another body that retained many of its coercive powers. Re-establishing the ABCC would bring higher penalties and greater powers to restrict picket lines.

According to the CFMEU, the introduction of the ABCC brought more deaths on the job, with restrictions on union officials’ right to enter building sites and intimidating effects on construction workers.

Those facing criminal charges have the right to remain silent, John Burns, 67, a working delegate of the CFMEU in Sydney told the *Militant*. “But under the ABCC laws, no building worker has the right to remain silent.”

Ukraine gov't toppled

Continued from front page ally depends on me.’ ... But after this situation, they think differently. They believe in their struggle when they are all together.”

At the heart of the struggle against Yanukovych by workers, youth and others are the aspirations of the Ukrainian people to break free from Russian domination that has lasted for centuries, with the exception of the early years of the 1917 Russian Revolution under the leadership of V. I. Lenin. Yanukovych, hated for his corruption and repression of political rights, bowed at every turn to pressure from Russian President Vladimir Putin to maintain Moscow’s economic and political stranglehold on Ukraine.

On advice from Putin, Yanukovych mobilized Berkut riot police Feb. 18 to push thousands of protesters out of Independence Square, known as the Maidan, as demonstrators took over some government buildings in Lviv.

The riot squad detachments were able to make it deep into the square before they were halted by giant barricades set on fire by the retreating demonstrators. Around 28 people were killed in clashes, including 10 cops.

Riot cops then opened fire on demonstrators Feb. 20, killing more than 60.

The bloodshed emboldened opposition protesters and sapped the will of the regime’s forces. Berkut troops began to break ranks and leave the square.

As events unfolded, many Ukrainian capitalists broke with Yanukovych and urged him to compromise.

On Feb. 21 Yanukovych agreed to meet with representatives from Russia, France, Germany and Poland, along with leaders of the three main bourgeois opposition parties — Fatherland, the ruling party before Yanukovych was elected in 2010; Punch, led by former heavyweight boxing champion Vitali Klitschko; and Svoboda, a rightist party. Yanukovych agreed to give up some powers and set a new election for December.

Parliament began passing a series of measures stripping the regime of its power.

When opposition leaders took the agreement to the square, they faced boos and rebellion. Volodymyr Parasiuk, a captain of one of the defense units that held the square, took the mike and denounced the opposition for “shaking hands with this killer.”

“We ordinary people are saying this to the politicians who stand behind us: ‘No Yanukovych is going to be a president for a whole year,’” Parasiuk, who told the press he is not a member of any party, said to a roaring crowd. “Tomorrow, by 10 o’clock, he has to be gone.”

Opposition politicians scurried off the stage. Klitschko later returned and tried to apologize.

Asked by a Reuters reporter when the protesters would take their barricades down, Parasiuk said, “If the Maidan disperses, politicians will stop being afraid. We are not going away.”

Yanukovych fled under cover of darkness that night. Organized forces from the Maidan deployed outside the square. They set up guards at the parliament building and other government offices. They entered and secured the presidential palace.

In Yanukovych compound opposition forces found a private petting zoo, a collection of vintage automobiles and other treasures, along with files that the ex-president clumsily attempted to destroy by submerging them in the Dnieper River.

The heads of the country’s paratroop unit, the Berkut, Alfa special operations forces and military intelligence went before parliament to declare their adherence to the opposition. On Feb. 26 Interior Minister Arsen Avakov announced the Berkut were disbanded.

Protests in US, Canada back Ukraine struggle



Militant/Dan Fein, above; Laura Anderson, inset

Thousands took part in demonstrations Feb. 23 in Toronto, New York, Chicago and other cities in North America in support of the overturn of Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovych and to commemorate the deaths of those who fought for independence there. Chants in English and Ukrainian included “Glory to the Ukraine,” “Glory to the martyrs” and “Putin, hands off Ukraine.”

“I am here to support the struggle for democracy, civil rights and political freedom in my country,” Iryna Stakhrya, who works in a medical office in Hackensack, N.J., told the *Militant* at the New York rally of more than 400 across from the Ukraine Consulate. “We need to be free from Russian interference.” Supporters of the socialist newsweekly sold 71 copies of the paper and three subscriptions.

Vasyl Pryshliak, a 29-year-old electrician who came to Chicago two years ago, told the *Militant* he joined the action of more than 200 there “for the memory of those who died for Ukraine independence and in the fight against government oppression.”

Hundreds rallied in Toronto’s Queens Park across from the Ontario provincial legislative building.

— JOHN STUDER

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

CALIFORNIA

San Francisco

Ukraine: Why Workers Should Back Fight Against Russian Domination. Speaker: Joel Britton, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., March 7, 7:30 p.m. 5482 Mission St. Tel.: (415) 584-2135.

ILLINOIS

Chicago

Protests Continue in Ukraine: Why Workers Should Support Struggle for Self-Determination Against Russian Boot. Speaker: Alyson Kennedy, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., March 7, 7:30 p.m. 806 W. Washington Blvd., Room 202. Tel.: (312) 455-0111.

MINNESOTA

Minneapolis

Egypt: Workers Press Demands as Rulers Seek Stability — Books About Working-Class Struggles Popular at Cairo Book Fair. Speaker: Betsy Farley, Socialist Workers Party and volunteer at Pathfinder Press booth at recent Cairo International Book Fair. Sun., March 9. Lunch, 1 p.m.; program, 2 p.m. 416 E. Hennepin Ave., Room 214. Tel.: (612) 729-1205.

AUSTRALIA

Sydney

Egypt: Workers Fight for Minimum Wage, Unions, Political Rights as Rulers Seek Stability. Speaker: Linda Harris, Communist League. Fri., March 7, 7 p.m. Upstairs, 3/281-287 Beamish St. Tel.: (02) 9718-9698.

CANADA

Montreal

Charbonneau Commission: Oppose State Intervention in the Unions. Speaker: John Steele, Communist League. Fri., March 7, 7:30 p.m. 7107 St-Denis, Room 204. Tel.: (514) 272-5840.

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Russian czarist empire and later the reactionary government of Joseph Stalin in the Soviet Union.

Parliament appointed Oleksandr Turchinov, a deputy from the Fatherland party, as interim president. Politicians in Kiev are now wrangling over ministries and powers behind closed doors. Parliament voted to set new presidential elections for May 25.

Sharp economic crisis

Turchinov immediately appealed to the European Union and Washington for immediate and substantial economic aid. He said Ukraine is “sliding into the abyss.”

The value of the currency, the hryvnia, has fallen sharply. Ukraine’s bond rating has been downgraded so steeply

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AUSTRALIA

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Fight for workers control of industry

In this issue and in recent weeks the *Militant* has reported on a spate of industrial “accidents” — from an explosion in an Iowa fertilizer warehouse to a chemical leak that poisoned the water supply in West Virginia. These man-made disasters resulting from the bosses’ profit drive pose the need for workers to take steps to defend themselves and their class as a whole.

Our fight to defend life and limb on the job is completely intertwined with efforts of workers and the labor movement to battle the bosses’ contamination of the food we eat; dangerous manufacture and transport of goods we need; and damage to the earth, water and air we breathe.

All these evils are the products of the lawful work-

ings of capitalism, which seeks profit at all costs, the danger to workers and surrounding communities be damned.

Workers need to fight to impose workers control over line speed, production processes, material handling and all aspects of production where we work. At the same time we demand the bosses open their books to expose their “business secrets” — the things they do and ways they collude to maximize profits at our expense and their despoiling of the environment.

Along this road, we need to back workers’ struggles to organize unions and to use union power to defend ourselves, mobilize solidarity with other workers’ battles, and join social struggles to defend workers’ allies on the land.

Popular mobilizations topple Ukraine gov’t

Continued from page 6

that the country can no longer borrow on international markets.

“The Ukraine government will soon be unable to pay public salaries or pensions,” the *Times* said.

Yuriy Kolobov, the acting finance minister, said Ukraine would need some \$35 billion by the end of next year.

“Though the West is claiming victory in the tug of war with Russia over Ukraine,” the Feb. 25 *Times* wrote, “neither the European Union nor the United States has done anything more than make promises.”

Lack of enthusiasm among U.S. and European capitalists betray their doubts that drawing Ukraine from Moscow toward European integration would be worth the expense.

The International Monetary Fund has told Ukrainian officials it won’t do anything “without a com-

mitment from the country to undertake painful austerity measures,” the *Times* reported, “tough reforms and a near-certain recession as a result.”

Given the blatant corruption and graft by politicians tied to newly minted millionaires since Ukraine’s independence, the *Times* said, aspirants for office are “regarded with suspicion by most Ukrainians, who would rather have a new face in the presidency.”

“We need new people who can say no to the oligarchs, not just the old faces,” Irina Nikanchuk, 25, told the *Times* while demonstrating outside the parliament building Feb. 24, watching legislators drive up in BMWs and Mercedes.

Calls for new political faces, the *Times* said, were “peppered with angry demands that the Parliament raise pensions, reopen closed hospitals and find work for the jobless.”

UAW vote in Tenn.

Continued from front page

dealt to the working class.

The “co-determination” deal rejected by VW workers was aimed, for the first time in the U.S., at setting up an institutionalized system of class collaboration modeled on similar such arrangements that have hog-tied German workers for decades.

Union membership in the U.S. has been shrinking for decades, the fruits of the union officialdom’s insistence on tying workers’ future to the profitability of their bosses and political support for the Democratic Party. Only 6.7 percent of workers in private industry are in unions today.

Every state in the South has a lower percentage of unionized workers than the national average. This is true in spite of the fact that Black workers are the most highly unionized of all sections of the working class.

Driven by a deepening crisis of their capitalist system of production and trade, the propertied rulers are deepening their attacks on workers’ jobs, wages and working conditions. Autoworkers have been a front-row target in this effort. UAW membership has fallen from 1.5 million in 1979 to 383,000 today.

In face of this assault UAW officials have made concession after concession — among them multitier wage scales and slashing of pensions — to facilitate the bosses’ efforts to rebuild their profit rates.

In Chattanooga the UAW had Volkswagen management and IG Metall, the union that organizes VW workers in Germany, on their side.

VW wanted to establish a works council, a worker-company collaborative body it has set up in its 105 plants around the world, with the exception of one in China and another in Tennessee. Under U.S. labor law, VW’s bosses needed a union in the plant to set one up.

The works council is an in-plant organization of workers designed to draw them into taking responsibility for the way the bosses run the company with “input” on work schedules, holidays, hirings, firings, promotions and safety. In case of differences a labor court decides.

Coming out of World War II, this institutionalized class collaboration was made the cornerstone of the relationship between labor and capital in Germany. About 75 percent of companies with more than 100 employees, and more than 95 percent with over 500, have works councils.

Berthold Huber, national chairman of IG Metall, is deputy chairman of Volkswagen’s Germany supervisory board.

This fits with the class-collaborationist course the union officialdom in the U.S. has pursued for decades. Those “who attacked this were attacking labor-management cooperation,” said UAW President Bob King Feb. 15.

With the precipitous drop in UAW membership, union officials need an expanded dues base to refill their coffers and pay their salaries. They saw the VW campaign, with the company’s willingness to exchange neutrality for a works council, as a boon.

Labor officialdom’s failure to organize South

The labor officialdom’s previous attempts to “organize the South” have all failed. In 1946 the CIO opened a campaign called Operation Dixie, with the stated goal of organizing millions of workers into the CIO. It ran smack into Jim Crow segregation.

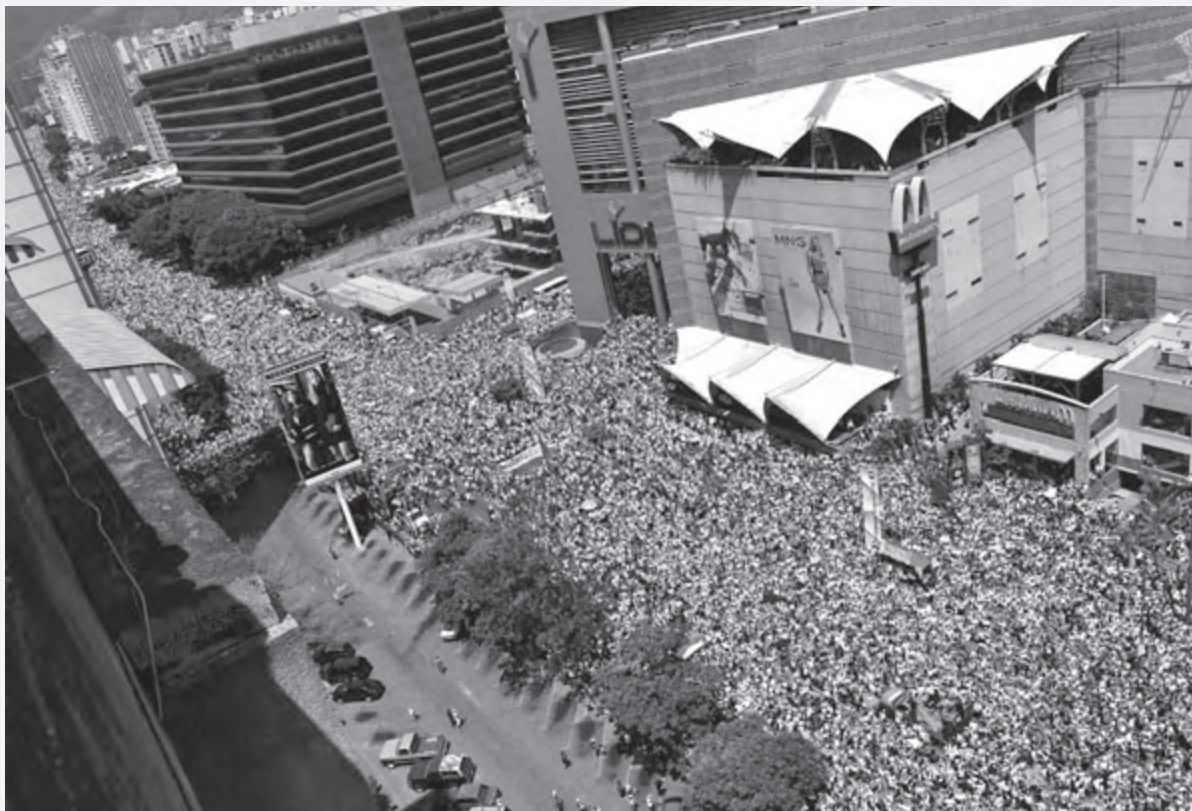
The Dixiecrats who ran the South were an essential component of the national Democratic Party coalition, along with the labor bureaucracy. To take the battle to them would mean shattering the political alliance they relied on. By 1948 “Operation Dixie” was past history.

One of the biggest issues in the 1955 merger of the AFL and the CIO was the question of segregation in the labor movement. A. Philip Randolph, president of the AFL Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, demanded that the new united federation deny affiliation to unions that practiced racial segregation.

No such step was taken. A number of AFL unions that barred Black members or maintained segregated “B” locals joined in the merger. Similarly, a proposal to launch a drive to champion Black equality and organize the South was quietly laid aside. To this day workers in the South are overwhelmingly unorganized.

While losing an organizing drive is never good, the defeat of UAW officials’ effort to tie workers into collaboration with the bosses is no obstacle to workers finding the road to fight back effectively.

Venezuela: Amidst social crisis, bourgeois opposition mounts anti-gov’t protests



AP Photo/Carlos Becerra

In face of an escalating capitalist social and economic crisis in Venezuela, bourgeois opposition to the government of President Nicolás Maduro has mushroomed into demonstrations by hundreds of thousands over the last several weeks. Above is an anti-government rally in Caracas, Feb. 22.

National Guard, police and pro-government groups have clashed with anti-government protesters.

Inflation is running at an annual rate of 56 percent; there are widespread shortages of food and basic goods; and crime is rampant. Auto assembly production is down 85 percent since last year.

A majority of the capitalist class opposes the Maduro government and have seized the opportunity to mount protest actions across the country. With the strongest backing among owners of businesses large and small, middle-class professionals and students, the demonstrations have also tapped into rising discontent among working people frustrated by deteriorating social conditions and policies of a government that has become weaker and more unstable since the death of former President Hugo Chávez in 2012.

Washington has tried to undermine the government ever since Chávez was elected president in 1998 and reorganized the country’s oil industry, using a part of oil profits to subsidize food and fuel costs and to fund social programs. The U.S. government especially hates the Venezuelan government’s ties with revolutionary Cuba, which has sent tens of thousands of volunteers to Venezuela to aid in literacy programs and provide free medical care. Caracas in turn has been sending more than 100,000 barrels of subsidized oil a day to Cuba, which opposition politicians have vowed to end.

— SETH GALINSKY

‘Cosmetics, Fashions, and the Exploitation’ launched at Havana book fair with new Spanish edition

BY CATHARINA TIRSÉN
AND RÓGER CALERO

HAVANA — *Cosmetics, Fashions, and the Exploitation of Women* “is an extraordinarily interesting and unusual book,” said Isabel Monal at the launching of the new Spanish-language edition of this book by Pathfinder Press at the Havana International Book Fair. Monal, a well-known writer and editor of the magazine *Marx Ahora* (Marx now), began her long history of revolutionary activity as part of the underground struggle against the Batista dictatorship in the 1950s.

“The connection between Marxism and cosmetics might be considered something unusual,” said Monal, “and I think that as the book gets around, some people are going to ask, ‘What does all this have to do with today?’” But it has everything to do with today, she said.

The panel of speakers, which also included Martín Koppel, speaking on behalf of Pathfinder Press, discussed the book’s explanation of how the owners of the cosmetics industry in the capitalist world exploit the economic and sexual insecurities of women to sell their products and boost their profits.

The presentation of *Cosmetics, Fashions, and the Exploitation of Women* was held Feb. 15 at an open-air patio of the Cuba Pavilion, a popular cultural center in the heart of Havana. The pavilion was bustling with families buying books and cotton candy for their children. Fairgoers flocked to attend poetry readings, photo exhibits and plays.

The book launch was chaired by Isabel Moya, director of Editorial de la Mujer, the publishing house of the Federation of Cuban Women (FMC). Moya had spoken here three years earlier at the presentation of the first Spanish-language translation of the book, released by the Cuban publishing house Ciencias Sociales. The new Pathfinder edition includes Moya’s remarks at the 2011 presentation.

Among the dozens in the audience were members of the Federation of Cuban Women and others who had come for the event. Many others who had been passing through the pavilion or were waiting for another program to start, sat down to listen.

Moya introduced the two panelists and Mary-Alice Waters, one of the book’s authors, its editor, and president of Pathfinder Press as well as a member of the National Committee of the Socialist Workers Party.

Monal said it was a pleasure to present a book by Pathfinder, “which has a long history of struggle.” Those who produce and distribute Pathfinder books, she said, “have never lowered their banners.”

As a young supporter of the July 26 Movement led by Fidel Castro, Monal was arrested and jailed, first in Cuba and later briefly in the United States while transporting guns to the revolutionary forces in Cuba — just as the Batista dictatorship was overthrown on Jan. 1, 1959.

Over the years she has been one of the staunchest defenders of Marxism in Cuba, teaching philosophy at the University of Havana and working as chair of Marxist Studies at the Philosophy Institute.

Monal is well known for insisting on studying Marx and Engels themselves, as opposed to the falsifications of Marx and Engels found in textbooks that came from the former Soviet Union.

A popular introduction to Marxism

“The publication of this book could not be more timely,” said Koppel. He pointed to the waves of strikes and demonstrations in Cambodia and Bangladesh in recent months by hundreds of thousands of mostly women garment workers fighting for an increase in the minimum wage and against brutal job conditions, as well as protests in India by thousands of women against gang rapes.

“Millions of workers who are women are joining class battles, gaining consciousness and confidence to fight, including against their second-class status,” he said.

Koppel noted that *Cosmetics, Fashions, and the Exploitation of Women* is, among other things, a popular introduction to Karl Marx’s *Capital*, “one of the best books we can read to help us understand women’s oppression and the fight to end it.”

The book was born in 1954, when

Militant editor Joseph Hansen, a leader of the Socialist Workers Party, wrote a humorous article deriding an advertising campaign by the U.S. capitalist “merchants of beauty” who were seeking to revive sagging profits at a time of economic recession, when women were spending less on cosmetics. The owners of the cosmetics companies were trying to convince women “that they simply had to have some new product in order to be happy and compete successfully with other women for a job and for a man,” Koppel said.

Hansen’s piece sparked a debate among *Militant* readers, including some who accused the author of ridiculing working-class women and of criticizing their “right” to use cosmetics and to seek “some loveliness and beauty in their lives.”

In several articles reprinted in the book, Hansen and Evelyn Reed respond to these critics. They explain how in our class-divided society the capitalist ruling class imposes on working people the standards of what is deemed beautiful and moral.

In the new edition, Moya notes how the capitalist rulers “get the exploited classes to internalize views about female beauty that the ruling powers themselves developed, and how, at the same time, obeying this cultural dictate is required for [women] entering the labor market.”

Commodity fetishism

Capitalist production transforms commodities into objects endowed with remarkable powers, Monal explained — what Marx called commodity fetishism. “Things that man himself created come to dominate us,” she said, including cosmetics and fashions.

“It’s normal for cosmetics to exist — they’ve been around for millennia,” she noted. But under capitalism, “they have become a means of influencing our thinking, a means of domination” by the owners of capital.

The pressures derived from the norms of beauty dictated by the ruling class “weigh heaviest on women,” said Monal. The capitalists manipulate “the normal fact of sexual desire among human beings” to reinforce women’s subordinate status, trying to convince them that they will not succeed without buying this or that product.

Quoting the preface by Waters, Koppel added that on an international scale, “the siren song of commodity fetishism is an imperialist weapon like none other” against the

peoples of Latin America, Asia, and Africa. Among the targets of this offensive is Cuba, which is “incessantly bombarded by the cynical promotion of ‘demand’ for must-have brand name products of capitalist industry.”

A class question

Cosmetics, Fashions, and the Exploitation of Women explains that these questions can only be understood as class questions. The subordinate status of women began only with the rise of class-divided society. “Understanding that women were not always an oppressed sex helps us understand that they will not always remain so,” Koppel said.

Eliminating women’s second-class status, however, will only become possible through “a revolutionary struggle by workers and farmers to take state power and overturn capitalist rule.”

Koppel pointed to the example of Cuba’s socialist revolution and the political clarity of its leadership, Fidel Castro above all. By breaking the domination of capitalist commodity production and massively drawing women into political activity and into productive labor outside the home, the revolution has opened the door to get rid of the economic foundations of women’s oppression, he said.

Following the presentation, participants bought close to 100 Pathfinder books on revolutionary politics, including some 40 copies of *Cosmetics, Fashions, and the Exploitation of Women*.



After presentation at book fair, participants bought nearly 100 Pathfinder Press books on revolutionary politics, including 40 copies of *Cosmetics, Fashions, and the Exploitation of Women*.
Militant/Paul Prendergast



Top, Militant/Seth Galinsky; below, Reuters/Chor So
“Women workers are joining class battles, gaining consciousness and confidence, including against their second-class status,” said Martín Koppel. **Bottom**, Sept. 15, 2010, garment strike, Phnom Penh, Cambodia. Workers locked out by Con Edison rally in New York, July 2012.

of Women' nish edition



Militant photos by Paul Prendergast
“The connection between Marxism and cosmetics might seem unusual,” said Isabel Monal, editor of *Marx Ahora* at Feb. 15 launch of *Cosmetics, Fashions, and the Exploitation of Women* in Havana. “But it has everything to do with today.” **Above**, from left, Martín Koppel, Pathfinder Press; Monal; Isabel Moya, director of Editorial de la Mujer; and Mary-Alice Waters, editor of book and president of Pathfinder. **Inset**, participants at event.

Book provides working-class view of women’s 2nd-class status

Isabel Moya, a leader of the Federation of Cuban Women and director of its publishing house, Editorial de la Mujer, chaired the meeting launching Pathfinder Press’s new Spanish edition of *Cosmetics, Fashions, and the Exploitation of Women* at the Havana International Book Fair. Reprinted below are remarks by Moya, made at a February 2011 meeting at that year’s book fair, launching the Cuban edition of the book. Her remarks are included in the new Pathfinder edition.

BY ISABEL MOYA

“Is the use of cosmetics worth the attention of a Marxist?”

—JACK BUSTELO

“Naked or clothed, dressed in linen or polyester, shaved, plucked, tattooed, painted, adorned with pearls or ceramic beads, siliconed, liposuctioned, covered with visible or invisible scars, with piercings in the most unimaginable places, dyed, bleached, with gray hair, highlights, subjected to diets and sessions at the gym or abandoned to the reign of carbohydrates and fat, the human body is a representation, an expression of one’s self and of other men and women.”

I wrote these reflections for the article “This body trimmed in beautiful things,” which appears in a book [*Sin contraseña: Género y transgresión mediática* —No password: Gender and media transgression— by Isabel Moya] that was also presented here a few days ago. However, the debate about the body and women, and in particular about the dictates and control exercised over them, which could very much seem to be something belonging to the third millennium, sparked a debate more than half a century ago in the New York workers paper, the *Militant*, and continued in a bulletin of the Socialist Workers Party in the United States.

This debate is available in the book we are presenting today, *Cosmetics, Fashions, and the Exploitation of Women*, by Joseph Hansen, Evelyn Reed, and Mary-Alice Waters.

Waters, who is with us this afternoon, wrote an enlightening preface that explains the context in which the debate occurred.

This book has several merits, in my opinion. First, it takes up the issue of the control of women’s bodies in the framework of the reproduction of patriarchal values during the explosive development of the consumerist phase of imperialism — a phase that today, paradoxically, has reached its highest expression and its deepest structural crisis.

Although we know that promises of youth and beauty go back to the origins of humanity, the exalted expression in advertising today — which promise youth and beauty not only from creams and all kinds of alchemy but also from surgery — emerged in its modern form in the 1950s.

In addition, the debate applies Marxist feminist analysis and a class perspective to the woman question. This is extremely useful in our context, where some men and women still see feminism as something foreign and of dubious origin and importance.

I must acknowledge that, unlike some of his contemporaries, I very much enjoyed the irony of the article by Joseph Hansen (alias Jack Bustelo). It hit a nerve, preparing the way for important essays, “Marxism and the Woman Question” by Evelyn Reed and “The Fetish of Cosmetics” by Hansen himself, which are printed in this book.

The inclusion of letters from women readers, not just those of theorists, offer a rich example of how the ruling powers get the exploited classes to internalize views about female beauty that the ruling powers themselves developed; and how, at the same time, obeying this cultural mandate is required for entering the labor market.

In the Cuban context, where there are more and more gender studies programs — we now have some thirty-three women’s or gender studies programs, various master’s degrees, and dozens of related theses — this book enables us to approach the issue

from a Marxist perspective.

But the part of the debate that perhaps moved me the most, and that I think could be an inspiration for the Cuban people in general and for specialists in particular, are the speculations sketched in the pages of this book about what beauty will mean under socialism, about how women’s bodies will be valued in the new society.

In building our society, this type of debate should not be seen as something secondary or subordinate, Hansen wrote, and I quote: “What we have in cosmetics is a fetish, a particular fetish in the general fetishism that exists in the world of commodities. The special power that cosmetics have derives from the fact that in addition to economic relations, sexual relations attach to them. That is the real source of the ‘beauty’ both men and women see in cosmetics.”

Cosmetics, Fashions, and the Exploitation of Women is a book that could be approached as work of philosophy, esthetics, economics, or gender studies — or perhaps as a bibliography. In my opinion, however, it is above all intended to provoke an ongoing debate in theory, in political practice, and in daily life—including its consequences in the community and in the media.

In the midst of the proliferation of so much garbage in the media, Evelyn Reed’s analysis seems as though it were written today. I quote: “Our task, therefore, is to expose both the capitalist system as the source of these evils and its massive propaganda machine which tells women that the road to a successful life and love is through the purchase of things. To condone or accept capitalist standards in any field — from politics to cosmetics — is to prop up and perpetuate this ruthless profit system and its continued victimization of women.”

In her own way, a Cuban woman with a universal outlook, Dulce María Loynaz, also demanded, as does Reed, the right of women to their diverse and multiple beings.

If you love me, love me whole,
not by zones of light or shadow ...
If you love me, love me black and
white,
and gray and green, and blonde and
dark ...
Love me by day,
love me by night ...
And by morning in the open win-
dow!
If you love me, don’t break me in
pieces:

Love me whole ... or don’t love me
at all!

Cosmetics, Fashions, and the Exploitation of Women

by Joseph Hansen, Evelyn Reed,
Mary-Alice Waters

Why do ever-changing standards of beauty, as well as moral values, always reflect those of the ruling class? How do the wealthy owners of the cosmetics and fashions “industries” play on women’s insecurities to sell products and rake in profits? How have the foundations of women’s oppression weakened as a result of the integration of women into the workforce? When did women become the “second sex” and what social forces have the power to end this second-class status?

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