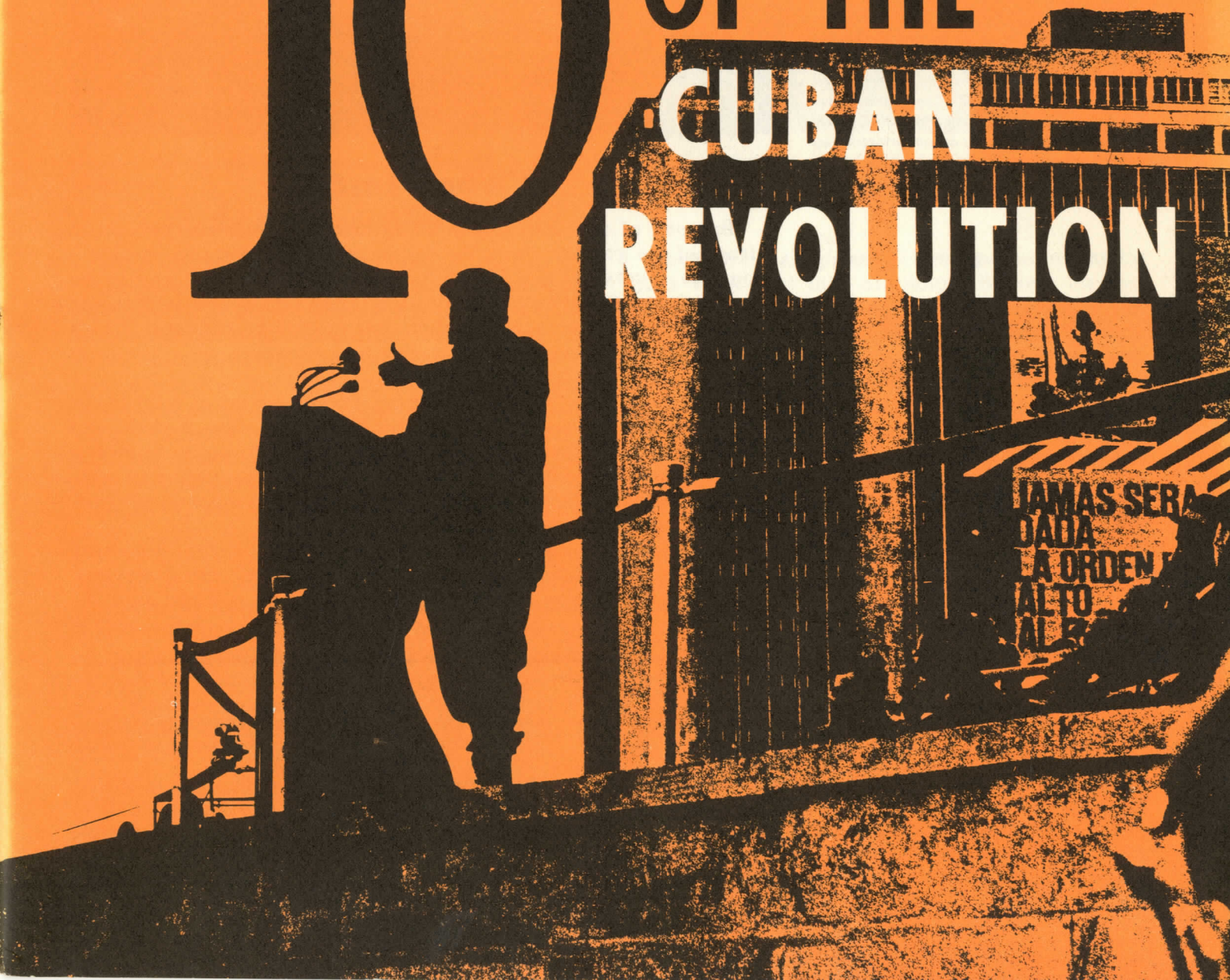


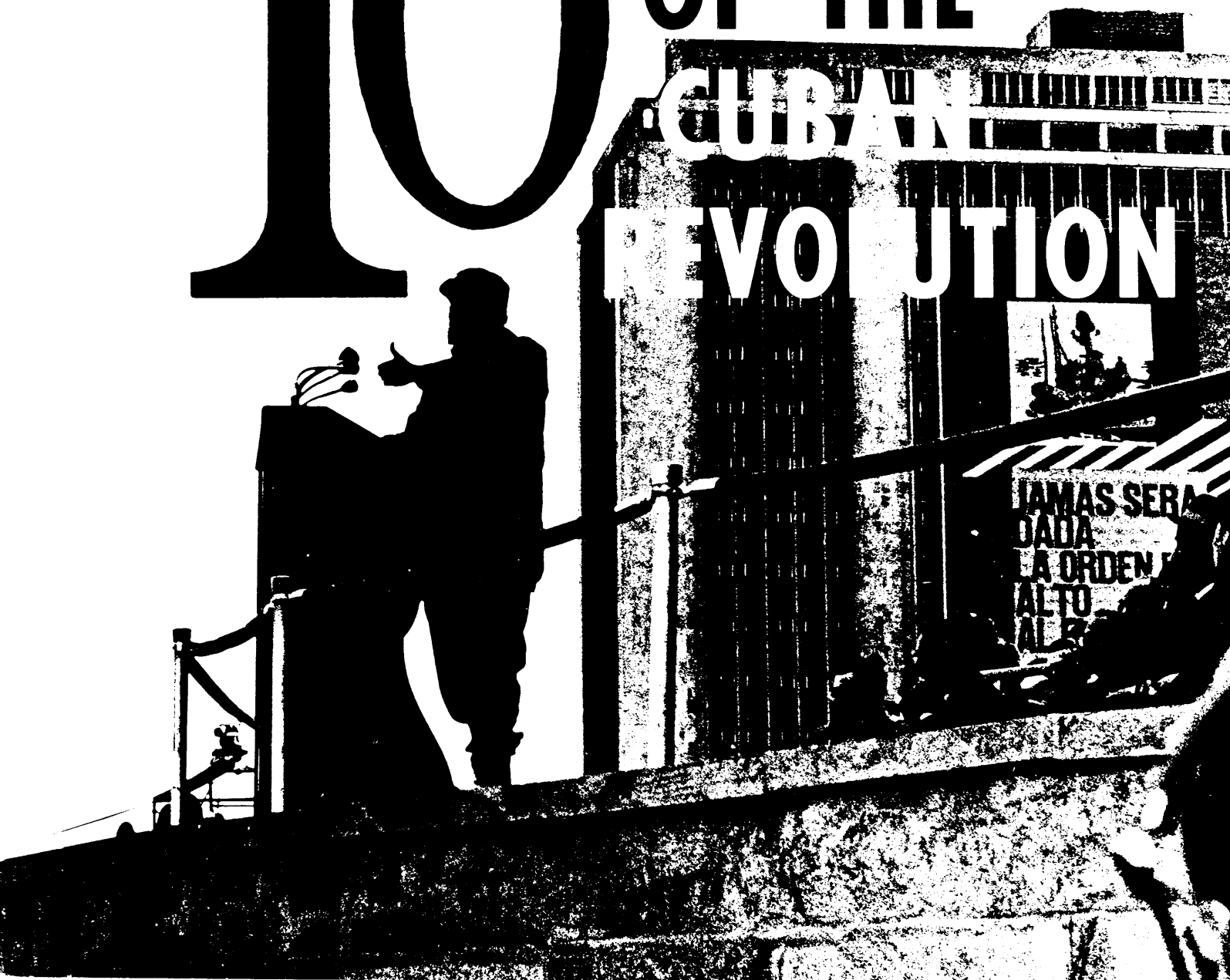
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10 YEARS OF THE CUBAN REVOLUTION



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Young Socialist Notes

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In this issue

The articles on Cuba in this issue of the Young Socialist have been written by members of the delegation of the Young Socialist Alliance that visited the island at the invitation of the Cuban government on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the revolution.

The delegation was made up of members of the YSA from a dozen cities across the country. As part of the YSA's campaign in defense of the Cuban revolution, each member of the delegation will be on a speaking tour in his or her region, winning support for the Cuban revolution, and

recruiting new members to the revolutionary socialist youth organization - the YSA.

If you are interested in arranging a meeting to hear a first hand report on the Cuban revolution, contact the YSA nearest you, or write to YSA, P. O. Box 471, Cooper Station, New York, N. Y. 10003.

It is impossible to get a fully rounded impression of every day life in Cuba from a visit of one month's duration. It is even harder when you come from the capitalist United States, because so many things are different that a kind of "culture shock" sets in.

When you get off the plane at Jose Marti International Airport the first thing you are struck by is the guns. It takes a number of days to get used to the idea that for the first time in your life these men and women with machine guns and rifles are on your side.

Driving into downtown Havana you are struck by the billboards. They don't demand that you buy mouth wash or soap but rather they tell how Cuba builds its revolution - with hard work and internationalism. "Vietnam - Brothers in Struggle" and "Los 10 Milliones Van" ("the ten million are going" refers to the sugar to be harvested in 1970). They are colorful and pop-artish.

Local telephone calls are free from the (non) pay phones in the street. You can't even find a slot to lose your dime in. How many times have you had to use a dime to get into the wash room back in the "Free World."

The Gua-Gua or bus (pronounced Waa-Waa because of the sound of the horn) pulls up to the stop and opens both the front and back doors. The passengers crowd in. From the back of the bus the nickles are handed forward, person to person, until they clink into the coin box.

"Who's Last?"

Because of the scarcities in Cuba there are lines everywhere: in front of the grocery store, the Coppelia ice cream stand, the pizza parlors (everyone gets his slice of pizza or ice cream) and at the restaurants. But the lines don't necessarily reflect who is first and who is last. When a new person gets on line he calls out "Who's last." The last person on line may be somewhere up at the front talking with some friends.

Cuba is a hard working country. People get up at 6:00 in the morning and are at work by 7, five and a half days a week. But on Sunday, millions of Cubans get up at 4:30 to be on busses at 5 to get out to the fields for a full day of voluntary labor in agriculture. Millions of extra hours of voluntary labor are given each day by Cubans to raise production.

Money is of diminishing importance in Cuba. Partially because of the rationing and partially because of the free social services, Cubans have money burning holes in their pockets. Fidel says the

continued on p. 22

CUBA: Ten Years of Revolution



Members of the YSA raise banner of solidarity with Cuba at Jan. 2 celebration of the 10th Anniversary of the Cuban revolution.

By Dan Rosenshine

The Cubans are internationalists. When they cry "Venceremos" they are speaking not only of themselves but of all people who are fighting for a better world, against capitalism, and for socialism. This internationalist spirit is expressed most strongly in their support of the Vietnamese liberation fighters. Billboards carry Che's message: "Create two, three, many Vietnams." Dams and schools are named for Vietnam. Little children wear NLF uniforms that their parents gave them for Christmas presents.

Solidarity with the Vietnamese is the official policy of the Cuban leadership. But it is much more than that, it is the expression of the overwhelming sentiment of the Cuban masses. It is articulated throughout Cuba by people, young and old, who recognize that the Vietnamese are fighting for the same type of revolution that the Cubans have already made. Cubans tell visiting North American revolutionaries that the Vietnamese are bearing the brunt of the world-wide battle against imperialist domination and that the outcome of the struggle in Vietnam will be decisive for the entire world revolution, particularly in the colonial world. They also make it clear that they feel it is the duty of every revolutionary and every revolutionary movement to do its utmost for the Vietnamese revolution.

The Cubans are proud of their revolution and the hard work that they are doing. Because they see that work as only part of an international struggle, their perspective is not limited to developments within Cuba. They believe that "the duty of every revolutionary is to make the revolution" and they want to know about anticapitalist struggles going on in each and every part of the world.

In particular, many Cubans are becoming aware of the rise of a new revolutionary generation in the advanced capitalist world—the United States, Western Europe, and Japan. The French events of May and June, 1968, the growth of the international antiwar movement, student struggles, and the continued intensification of the Afro-American struggle have all had an impact in Cuba. Cubans are eager to learn about these struggles, and listen to the experiences and the opinions of those involved.

Demonstrations and radical activity in the U. S. are reported in the Cuban press, although the coverage is inadequate for anyone interested in an extensive analysis of the political life of the left in the U. S. As a result, few Cubans have a really rounded view of what is going on in this country.

The increase in consciousness about events in the industrialized capitalist countries is indicated by the

fact that, while we were in Cuba, a lengthy article was published in *Tri-continental* magazine dealing with the revolutionary situation that existed in France last spring, and the default of the French Communist Party.

Members of our delegation were asked a lot of questions about the radicalization in the United States: "Tell us about Columbia, Berkeley, and San Francisco State. How are the antiwar demonstrations organized? How is the Black Panther Party doing? What did black people think after the killing of Martin Luther King? What do young radicals in the U. S. think about our revolution? How do you Young Socialists believe a revolutionary situation will develop in your country?"

Questions like these were asked by workers in the fishing port of Havana, by members of the Cuban Communist Party and the Union of Young Communists, by 10-year-old schoolchildren, by students in the universities, and by people on the buses or on the street.

Life in Cuba is not easy, but it is qualitatively different from the capitalist Cuban past, where illiteracy, unemployment, starvation and malnutrition were commonplace. Ten years of the revolution have brought big gains in a number of important areas.

Education is not only free but strongly encouraged. In the early 1960's a mass literacy campaign brought thousands of students to the countryside to teach reading and writing. Recently, a goal of a sixth grade educational minimum for the entire population was set. Many working people we spoke to attend school in the evenings. Hundreds of thousands of teenagers receive scholarships to study and live at state expense. Education is crucial for the labor skills Cuba needs to emerge from underdevelopment. The revolution is faced with the task of developing skilled agricultural workers and technicians, doctors, engineers, teachers, and skilled workers in many areas at the fastest possible rate.

Medicine is free and it is a norm, especially for young people, to receive regular checkups. Rent will be free next year. Public telephones are already free. In the area of social benefits Cuba has developed to the point where, in many areas, it surpasses



Che Guevara, symbol of the internationalism of the Cuban revolution.

the United States.

But in the crucial area of economic strength — labor productivity through technical achievement — Cuba is still an underdeveloped country facing a difficult situation. The list of obstacles is staggering.

First and foremost is the blockade on trade imposed by the United States. As well as cutting off direct trade, the U. S. uses its control of markets and corporations around the world to discourage trade with Cuba. This means

that orders for spare parts or medicine will be cancelled when American capital is invested in a European firm.

As a primarily agricultural country, Cuba's economy is dependent on weather conditions. The past ten years have seen a record number of droughts.

Further, the selling price of much of Cuba's exports, most importantly that portion of the sugar crop that is sold on the open market, is set outside of

Cuba in the world capitalist market.

Trade with other workers states, such as the Soviet Union and China, has been decisive for Cuba to exist. But the Cubans must add to all of their other difficulties the fact that the quantity, quality, and regularity of this trade is subject to the control of the ruling bureaucracies in those countries, who use this control to exert political pressure for their own ends. One example of this was the cutting off of rice trade by China when Cuba refused to line up with China in the Sino-Soviet dispute. Another was the limiting of Soviet oil trade in early 1968 during a period of big expansion of Soviet oil production.

As a result of all of these difficulties, practically all consumer goods are scarce, including clothes and food. Goods are rationed to insure as equal a distribution as possible. Nobody starves in Cuba, nor did we see anyone in rags—and this is in itself a sign of tremendous social progress. But each family has to make the food and clothes they do get go a long way.

Faced with this situation, the central approach in Cuban economic planning is the intensive utilization of Cuba's key resource—agricultural capacity, in particular sugar—for sale in the world market. Citrus fruits and coffee are also being planted for export. Cuba plans to surpass Israel as the world's primary citrus exporter in the 1970s. The surpluses obtained through trade, in the form of foreign exchange credits, can be applied to the purchase of goods that Cuba does not produce, particularly capital goods. This general concept is the foundation of the drive for a sugar harvest of 10 million tons in 1970.

Another basic goal is the construction of an irrigation system that, by 1975, will conserve all water supplies and remove dependence on rainfall. The Cubans also plan to completely mechanize the sugar harvest by 1975 in order to eliminate the millions of hours of backbreaking work now necessary to bring in the crop. This will free labor power for reallocation in other areas of production.

Cuba's planned economy has not only eliminated unemployment, but there is today a growing labor shortage. To deal with the labor shortage, millions of hours of voluntary labor are worked in the countryside by the

city dwellers. As part of the school year, children spend 45 days in agricultural labor. The students are regarded as among the most enthusiastic workers. Many workers, particularly in export industries, work overtime on a voluntary basis.

All of this is an indication of the greatest gain of the revolution: the consciousness and determination of the Cuban people themselves, their willingness to work, and to sacrifice, and their desire to learn and develop. This factor is the basis of every achievement that has been made.

The demands on the Cuban people are great. Holding a regular job, studying, doing volunteer work, standing in shopping lines, and doing militia duty is a tough schedule. This type of life, extended over a period of years, and with no immediate perspective of relief, can wear down all but the most profoundly conscious of revolutionaries. And this kind of life has taken its toll among a section of the population which supports the revolution but doesn't feel that it can participate fully in it. No genuine supporter of the revolution can ignore this fact. But what is truly inspiring, and a source of tremendous inspiration and confidence in the power of the masses to build a new society, is the enthusiasm of the great majority of Cubans after ten years of the revolution. Their support for the revolution is unwavering.

For black people and for women,

the revolution has meant a tremendous advance. One indication of this is the number of black women who hold key administrative posts—as school principals, as hospital directors, and as army officers. The articles in this issue of the *Young Socialist* by Derrick Morrison and by Linda Jenness examine the role of blacks and women in more detail.

The hardest working sector of the population is the Cuban youth. Whether it's developing artificial insemination for cattle, producing movies, organizing a unit of the Communist Party, or teaching classes over TV for junior high school students, people in their early twenties have enormous responsibilities. Their discipline and consciousness are symbolized by the 20,000 volunteers working on the Isle of Youth. This support for the revolution has been strengthened and maintained because the Castro leadership team has publicly fought against attempts to install a materially privileged bureaucratic caste such as those that exist in the Soviet Union and China. Hatred for any form of privilege or selfish interest prevails throughout the population.

But the revolutionary leadership is not perfect, as they are the first to admit. The official position on Czechoslovakia, supporting the Soviet invasion, is, in my opinion, a serious error. Beginning in January, 1968,

cont'd on p. 20



YSAers in discussion with Vietnamese at reception in honor of 10th anniversary of the Cuban revolution.

A Cuban Film

"LUCIA"

The Battle
for

Women's Liberation in Cuba



By Linda Jenness

Lucia is a very popular movie being shown in Cuba which has aroused much discussion and controversy. The Cuban Revolution, in ten short years, has surged far ahead of all the other Latin American countries in terms of freeing women from the stifling traditions, the economic dependence, and the incredible false morality under which they suffer. The Cuban Revolution has made a conscious effort to help women gain their

independence and assume their rightful position in Cuban society. *Lucia* is an example of that effort. It is one of the few full-length movies made in Cuba and its direct thrust against male chauvinism comes through in a clear, active, and revolutionary way.

The movie consists of three separate parts whose central figures are women in different periods of the revolutionary struggle in Cuba. Each part centers around the role of the woman



Evelyn Kirsch and Mareen Jasin talking with women from a tractor brigade, who had been trained to operate and repair tractors to be used in the Havana Green Belt.

within her society and within the revolutionary struggle and expresses her oppression, her frustrations, and her struggle for freedom.

Lucia in 1868, during the Cuban struggle for independence from Spain, comes from an upper-class family and is fairly typical of women in her society during that period. She leads an inane life of tea parties, sewing, frilly clothes, silly games, church-going, and gossip. Completely caught up in repressive moral rules and games, the falseness and absurdities of her life are dramatized and emphasized to the point of ridiculousness. Lucia is not politically aware, although she loves and is loyal to her brother who is hidden in the country fighting the Spaniards.

Lucia is courted by a refined Spanish gentleman who claims indifference to the war. The courtship follows the proper rules of always being accompanied by her mother, being escorted in grand flurry to church, being teased and gossiped about by the other women. Lucia is euphoric until the most dreadful of things happens—it is discovered that the Spanish gentleman has a wife in Spain! Lucia is crushed, shamed, her life is ruined. She stays in bed for days crying endlessly and wishing only to die. Throughout the rest of the sequence she wears only black.

But Lucia rebels. In a torturously melodramatic scene we see Lucia struggle with her tradition, religion, and oppression to become the Span-

iard's lover and run away with him.

As she is leaving town to meet her lover she is accosted by the village mad-woman who represents the indignation and oppression of the poorest classes of Cuban society. The mad-woman vents her rage with bursts of anger toward Spanish troops and hysterical screams of wild predictions and fury. The woman begs Lucia not to leave, not to trust the Spaniard, and predicts her doom.

Lucia travels on horseback with the Spaniard to her brother's hide-out where the Spaniard betrays her. He has used her to lead the Spanish troops to the hide-out and throws her from the horse and rides away. Lucia is alone, confused, and panicked during the long battle between the Cubans and the Spaniards. She finds her brother killed and her confusion and panic turn into a determined hatred and anger. She walks for days back to the town where she sees her lover, dressed in a Spanish uniform, chatting with other officers in the square. She stabs him to death.

The first sequence ends with Lucia being dragged away while the mad-woman strokes her face and comforts her with tears streaming down both their faces.

Lucia in 1933, during the struggle to topple the Machado dictatorship, comes from a middle-class family. She is a gentle, willowy girl who falls in love with a young revolutionary and leaves family and school to live with him. Unlike the Lucia of 1868, she

directly participates in the revolutionary struggle along with other women. She tries to build support for the movement against Machado in the tobacco factory where she works, she participates in demonstrations; but her role is secondary and she spends endless hours waiting and worrying.

The Machado dictatorship is overthrown in 1933 and is replaced by Batista. Lucia and the group of young revolutionaries are happy and consider their job done. The young men are rewarded with good jobs and one by one become caught up in the bureaucracy and decadence that continues. Only Lucia's companion painfully becomes aware that just the faces at the top have changed. That the rottenness remains. His happiness turns into frustration and despair as he realizes that this is not what they have struggled for, and that the struggle has to continue. Lucia, motivated by love and loyalty for her companion, agrees to continue the revolutionary struggle with him.

The young man joins another group of revolutionaries and after attacking and killing some members of the government he is killed in a battle with the cops. Lucia is left alone, pregnant, confused, and with no place to go.

The second sequence ends with Lucia walking hopelessly back and forth by a bridge, carrying her suitcase.

Lucia in the 1960's, during the hard struggle to build a socialist Cuba



Day nursery at the San Andreas Project. The establishment of day nurseries on a national scale in Cuba has begun to lay the groundwork for the real emancipation of women by freeing them from slavery in the home.

today, is a healthy, vivacious, black woman who lives and works in the country. The tone of the third sequence is fast, funny, and contemporary. She falls in love with a young white farm worker who drives a truck and they carry on a carefree, uninhibited romance and get married. Some of the old women in the village gossip about the quick marriage and the fact that they seem to hibernate in the house since their marriage—but this is laughed at by the audience.

Shortly after their marriage the young man's jealousy is aroused when Lucia dances with another man at a wedding. A hilarious scene follows where he actually locks Lucia into the house. He nails up the windows, bolts the doors, forbids her to leave under any circumstances or to receive any visitors. Lucia is forbidden to work in the fields with the other women and is left to brood and be bored at home, completely dependent on his coming home for her company and happiness. A few times she begs to be allowed to go visit her mother but her protests

go no further than that and are to no avail. In the meantime the young man is completely happy and cocky. He works all day, flirts with the other girls in the field, and participates in the political and social life of the village.

The literacy campaign in the early 1960's took thousands of young people into the countryside to teach the people in the country to read and write and to help them with their work. A team is sent to Lucia's village and the entire village is bursting with excitement and pride and warmly receives the youth. Lucia's husband, however, is far from happy when a quiet, gentle boy of about 14 shows up on his doorstep to teach Lucia to read and write. He protests bitterly to the leaders of the village that the boy simply can not live in his house, but the villagers insist and the young man stays.

The young boy meekly takes in the whole situation and after constantly being subjected to outbursts of jealousy by Lucia's husband and seeing

Lucia continually locked and bolted in her house his anger is aroused. They are never left alone but whenever possible he tries to tell Lucia that she doesn't have to live like a slave, that she should leave her husband and get out while she can. Lucia is confused and doesn't know what to do.

One night, in a fit of jealousy, the husband hits the young man and stomps out of the house. Lucia leaves and goes to one of the woman leaders in the village and explains in tears that she loves her husband but can not stand to live that way and she doesn't know what to do. The woman says that it's really very simple—Lucia should stay with her and go to work in the morning with the rest of the women. And Lucia does just that. Coming home drunk early that morning the husband finds Lucia gone and a note in newly learned handwriting which says "I am not a slave."

He finds Lucia in the field and tries to take her back home but the other women, in the most delightful scene of the movie, tackle him, hold him down, and refuse to let him take Lucia back.

They live separately for a time but they are both miserable. The husband drinks and Lucia is lonely and depressed. Lucia decides to return to him and finds him on the beach. She explains that she can not stand to live away from him, but neither can she live like a slave, that she wants to return but she must be allowed to work and be a human being. He is overjoyed that she has returned but furious that she refuses to obey him—and the fight starts all over again. But this time Lucia is holding her own and fighting back and a rollicking chase and struggle ensue.

The Cuban Revolution is still in process and the struggles within the revolution are still in process, including the struggle against male chauvinism. Lucia has not won but she is fighting, gaining strength and support, and, like the Cuban Revolution, she will win.

A little girl is watching the scene from a distance with bewilderment and concern. As she slowly figures out what is going on her concern turns to amusement and then to laughter. The third sequence of the film ends with Lucia fighting back and the next generation of Cuban women laughing.

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Interview with a U.S. Medical Student

By Evelyn Kirsch



Cubans are taking a preventive approach to medicine, with emphasis on the nature of the environment and control of disease before it begins.

A group of U.S. medical students visited Cuba at the same time that we were there. They had been there for about two and a half weeks at the time that I was able to talk to them, and had been spending their time, primarily, visiting medical institutions.

Mike Silverstein, a medical student from Palo Alto, California, gave me his impressions of Cuba and of the Cuban medical system. His views were particularly interesting in light of the fact that Mike is not a member of any political organization and he does not consider himself a socialist. He is a radical who came to Cuba as a medical student to investigate for himself the accomplishments of the revolution in his field.

Mike told me that although he had had some ideas of what might be happening in Cuba (most of which were confirmed by his visit), there were some things that he hadn't anticipated. "First of all, the amount of technical progress in all the institutions of life in Cuba is pretty overwhelming. It's just a spectacular thing: the number of hospitals that have been built or are being built, the type of organizational framework which is developed through the public health system, and the educational system through which doctors are being trained at a very rapid rate."

Mike felt from what he had seen that the Cubans were no longer underdeveloped in terms of health by

Western standards. And he felt that at the rapid rate that the Cubans were moving, it would be a fairly short period of time before Cuban medicine matches the best of U. S. accomplishments.

I asked him to explain the structure and level of technique of medicine in revolutionary Cuba. He said that "medical care is by and large free, but I believe that some drugs cost money if you just buy them with a prescription from a pharmacy. The medical system in Cuba is highly organized structurally, just as everything else is. The country is broken down into regions, areas, and sectors, and there is a system of large hospitals and small hospitals, smaller polyclinics, and still smaller first aid stations, that reach nearly throughout the country. The model at least is there and the Cubans are in the process of filling in the picture in terms of per-

sonnel and facilities, and I think it's going to be a very impressive thing once they get done.

"Certainly you see some very impressive things already, some very large modern hospitals in places where you wouldn't expect them and certainly in places where they never existed before. But again that's technical, the filling in of that whole network of facilities. The more important question really is what approach are the Cubans taking towards medical care. My impression is that it's going to be largely a preventive approach with emphasis on the nature of the environment and control of disease before it begins. That's really the whole focus of the revolution. . . . The care of people is just a very natural consequence of all the changes that are occurring here."

Mike noted that an interesting corollary to the changing of environment

to improve health is the fact that people in medicine in the United States often try to combine political work with medicine. They feel that certain political problems directly relate to the level of health care people get. That is, if a child is treated for a disease he picks up from living in poor housing in a ghetto, he'll inevitably contract the disease again. Mike expected to find that the doctors in Cuba would be concerned with these problems as some are in the United States. But instead he found out that "in such a political context where the whole nation is geared to eradicating those types of social ills, the doctor is free from a lot of those concerns and is free to actually practice medicine and to learn the much more technical side of it that he probably wanted to be involved in in the first place. There are other people who are worried about housing."

Several of the students had applied to stay in Cuba for another two months to "be able to work with the Cuban people as well as just tour the country." Some of them also wanted to spend a longer period of time in Cuba observing the social relationships between doctors and patients, doctors and nurses, and doctors and other hospital personnel. He noted that in the United States medicine is "status-ridden and very class oriented. The games that are played are continual, the superior-inferior types of thing in which the doctor is at the top of the pyramid and the patient ultimately is at the bottom and suffers for it."

Mike said that his delegation "hoped to find that a lot of these things don't exist in Cuba, that the patient isn't treated like a non-human being, and that the patient isn't presented to the medical students as a liver, but as a person with problems."

Mike told me he felt that the Cubans had a definite reason for inviting them to visit Cuba and that the medical students would be able to help the Cubans in a number of ways. "They probably will need a great deal of help from us in terms of getting information to them, like journals and information about our health system. They are very concerned also that Americans just come down and see Cuba from all aspects of life, and bring back some kind of message to the American people."



Scene in Pinar del Rio, showing pre-revolutionary housing. Conditions like this, which inevitably lead to chronic and recurring disease, are disappearing in Cuba. Not so in the U. S. A.



DRUM workers walking out on the Chrysler Corporation at Dodge Main plant in Detroit.

Dodge Revolutionary Union Movement DRUM

An Interview with DRUM

The following interview was given to the Young Socialist by two leaders in the Dodge Revolutionary Union Movement (DRUM) in Detroit. An article detailing the history and development of DRUM was printed in the November, 1968, YS.

Since this interview in December, a sister organization of DRUM, ELRUM (Eldon Revolutionary Union Movement) was successfully formed at the Chrysler gear and axle plant at Eldon.

YS: Nixon has been talking a lot about black capitalism, that is, giving blacks "a piece of the action." Do you think this is a fraud?

DRUM: It might not be a fraud. I would think that it would be desirable

at this point for the capitalists in this country to free a pseudo-black capitalist class, as they have in all black countries throughout the world. I am convinced, however, that this won't work because we are not about to buy that. We will continue to struggle against capitalists, be they black or white. I say that it's about time in this country that the word capitalist became a bad word, because it is a bad word; it represents all that oppresses us, all that enslaves us in this country. If someone says "I am a capitalist," then we should be going up 'side his head, because what he's saying is that he wants to oppress us.

YS: What is the relationship between DRUM and the black students on campuses in Detroit?

DRUM: We don't have a relationship with them, other than that we're both members of the same community, and that we come from the same community. Hopefully in some way they will contribute to the struggle and thereby identify with us. Personally, I view students as at present a type of elite, an opportunist type of elite. We do have some people on campuses, but they're not there to function as students, they're there for the purpose of searching the overall cause. It has nothing to do with their personal desire to graduate from one of these institutions or to particularly organize students.

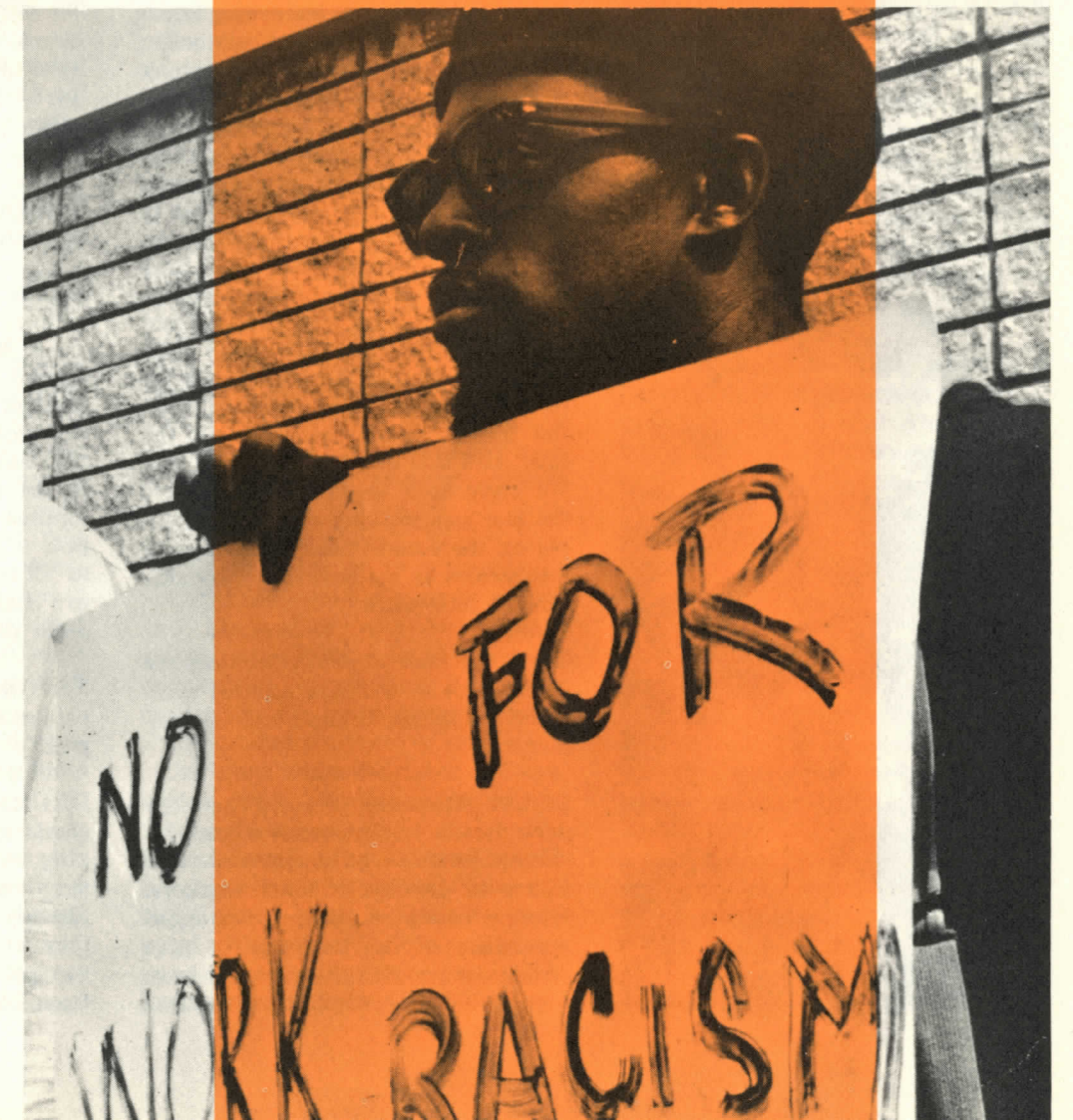
YS: Is it fair to conclude, then, that you see the main force of social change

in this country in the working population?

DRUM: Black workers.

YS: How do you see DRUM's relationship to other organizations, and to the whole struggle for black liberation?

DRUM: We of course view DRUM as the most significant organization thus far in the sense that it is a working-class organization. It has always been our understanding that the most significant element of the struggle is the black worker. It was just a matter of time before we began to move in organizing that area. We would hope to see DRUM type organizations developing throughout the country; we en-



Dodge Revolutionary Union Movement



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YS: How do you see DRUM's relationship to other organizations, and to the whole struggle for black liberation?

DRUM: We of course view DRUM as the most significant organization thus far in the sense that it is a working-class organization. It has always been our understanding that the most significant element of the struggle is the black worker. It was just a matter of time before we began to move in organizing that area. We would hope to see DRUM type organizations developing throughout the country; we en-



courage this. We would aid in their development in any way that we can. We think that this will happen, given conditions in the plants — the heavily exploitative racist situation that exists — in all areas of industry in this economic system.

We are in touch with, and helping to develop, several other organizations in other plants. I think the conditions that produced DRUM exist in all of the auto plants throughout the country, and the world, probably. I think the same conditions will give birth to these kinds of organizations, it is just a matter of time before we will see situations happening like the situation with the Chicago bus drivers, the Hotpoint workers, and so on.

We think the DRUM experience is the wave of the future. What is happening in Chicago and various other places with various kinds of workers is going to happen throughout the country with black workers. And we're working towards that end.

The one thing common to everyone in the black community is that we work in some form to earn a living. Whether you're a Panther, or from SNCC, or



what not, if you don't work, someone in your family does. In this sense we feel we can reach the maximum number of people in the community.

YS: What would you project as the next higher stage, after DRUM, in the development of organization and consciousness?

DRUM: The organization of workers is the highest stage, but what will happen then, what we hope will happen, is that workers throughout the country would organize themselves into DRUM type organizations and that all these organizations would come together and launch an all black party for revolutionary struggle.

YS: Henry Ford's famous five dollars a day was exposed as a fraudulent public relations gimmick because of the speed-up that went with it. This was in the 1920's. How are conditions today?

DRUM: The worker today is still breaking his back, he's working harder, producing more, and relative to the 20's, getting paid less. The work week varies depending on the company and what time of year it is. At Ford, since changeover in September, workers have been working 12 hours a day, seven days a week. This is true in a lot of plants. Dodge works seven days, though most of the time its six days. In terms of the speed up, at the Ford plant where the agreed upon rate with the UAW is 136 units per hour, the line has been sped up to 172, which is 36 units more, without increasing the personnel on the line. And this happens at Dodge too. We have seen instances there where the line was moving so fast that people on the second floor were running downstairs to the first floor to catch up with their work.

YS: What kind of protection does the union give to workers against arbitrary discipline, firings, and harassment?

DRUM: Absolutely none. The only protection a worker has is a compassionate foreman or supervisor. This is true in the case of black workers. White workers rarely get discharged regardless of the situation. We have had many people contact us who have been arbitrarily discharged in clear

cut cases of racism. Black workers have no protection at all. That's why it's not too difficult to organize black workers, because they know they don't have anything to lose, they have no job security. A man with 17 years was discharged for not submitting to a search by plant protection of his lunch bucket.

YS: How has DRUM affected the bosses and their attitude toward black workers at Dodge Main?

DRUM: I would say we've had a major effect. For one thing we've had a number of overtures from agents of the company and the union, trying to get us to meet with them, and probably trying to make some kind of compromise. At any plant, and Dodge in particular, the tendency at times has seemed to be towards more leniency, but at other times they lapse back into their racist thing. I think that this has more to do with the management at the plant level. The company is naturally moving to try to co-opt the movement and they're carrying out a heavy public relations campaign throughout the country about the Chrysler "equal opportunities program," which is a farce, and we know it.

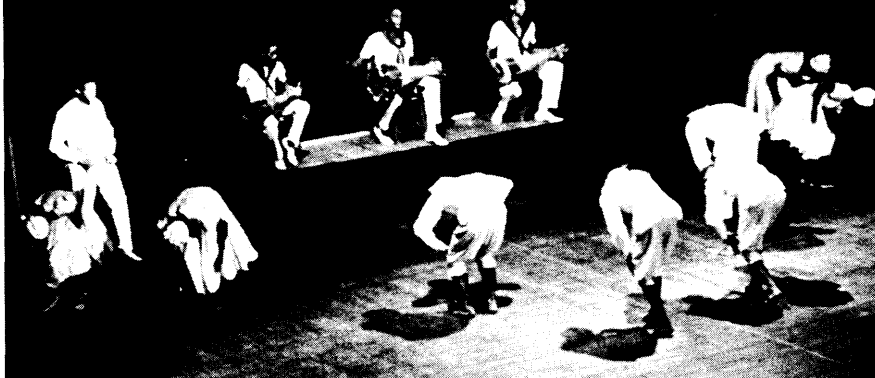
YS: What kind of activity is DRUM currently engaged in?

DRUM: We are stepping up our organizing. Until a majority of the workers in that plant are organized, we're limited in what we can do. We have another election coming up that we are going to participate in wholeheartedly. We have had some activity in the community: we demonstrated against the Urban League's presentation of an equal opportunity award to Chrysler, Ford and GM. And we are making contacts with workers in other plants, to help them get started.

YS: What kind of campaign do you project that the UAW will wage against you?

DRUM: They will probably try to use smear and slander tactics on us, probably try to brand us as racists, trying to alienate white workers who are already alienated. We anticipate that they will run a tom in the union for vice-president, to take votes away from DRUM.

Black Cuba



All-black National Folklore Group produces plays with Yoruba and West Indian themes.

By Derrick Morrison

A measure of the depth of any social revolution is how profoundly it changes the lives of the most exploited and brutally oppressed sections of the population. In respect to the Cuban Revolution, this is best exemplified in the status and condition of Afro-Cubans.

Before the Revolution, the treatment meted out to black people in Cuba by the exploiters was a reflection of the criminal conditions suffered by black people here in the United States. At the beginning of this century, on the bayonets of U.S. troops, the budding Yankee colossus attempted to convert Cuba into a miniature model of everything 'American.' To this end, North American corporations in Cuba refused to hire Afro-Cubans, except in the most menial, lowest-paying jobs. Private Protestant and Catholic schools were set up on an all-white basis, since the U.S. government found it impossible to set up a publicly segregated school system that would have provided 'special' education for the blacks. Over a period of time, black Cubans were restricted from certain housing areas, with some parks and beaches being declared off limits.

Cuba became a Caribbean dream, materialized for the joy-seeking local oligarchs and the profit-hungry U.S. corporations. However, for Cubans in general and Afro-Cubans in particular, Cuba was just one long nightmare, from which no awakening was possible.

During and after World War II U.S. influence increased immeasur-

ably in the country. According to black Cuban artists that I talked with, this period was most severe in terms of the cultural strangulation exercised by the Yankee. Since Cuban culture has a strong Afro flavor, this strangulation was directed primarily at the African heritage.

To the Anglo imperialist way of thinking, the cultural strangulation was to serve the purpose of getting the people to identify somewhat with the all-mighty Yankee. Obfuscation of the heritage was part of the process of extracting as much surplus value as possible from the Cuban labor force.

This whole set-up seemed to be grooving along pretty well until January 1, 1959. It was on this date that the whole machinery of oppression was brought to a halt. The lid was off, allowing all types of previously hidden sentiments and aspirations to surface.

Judging from what I have read about Cuba, and my observations and discussions with Afro-Cubans while I was there, a lot of these sentiments and aspirations have been realized, or are in the process of being realized, after ten years of revolution.

One must understand that in Cuba, before 1959, racial oppression was very mild compared to that in the United States. Yet, a socialist revolution was required to wipe out this 'mild' case. This should serve as a point of departure for those searching for a resolution of racial oppression here in the United States.

Owing to the realization of some of their aspirations, Afro-Cubans are very much a part of the Cuban Revolution. For example, it is a common sight to see black Cubans, decked out in olive green, packing a .45 on the hip. These are the Brothers in the Revolutionary Armed Forces, FAR. Or, when you walk down the street in Havana or Santiago de Cuba, you see, among others, Brothers and Sisters decked out in blue work shirts and olive green trousers or skirts, with a bolt-action rifle or sub-machine gun slung over the shoulder. These Brothers and Sisters are part of the militia, which is elected out of the place where they work.

In Santiago de Cuba, which is a heavily black city in Oriente province, I talked with several Afro-Cubans living in a newly constructed housing project of 60,000 people. Most of the people living in the project had previously lived in houses that were flooded by heavy rains. They no longer have that problem. The Brothers I spoke with said that a lot of the families living in the project participated in drawing up plans for the housing, and in the actual construction process. This is what I call Community Control. I related to the Brothers the problems that black people here in North America have in trying to achieve community control of housing. They responded by pointing out that the capitalists still have power in the United States. This required no deep reflection on their part, because they were speaking from experience.



Commandante Juan Almeida, head of the Rebel Army.

At a sugar mill in the town of Urbano Norris, also in Oriente, I met young Afro-Cubans who had jobs as welders, electricians, and machinists. These types of occupations were off limits for a lot of young Afro-Cubans before 1959.

Many of the leaders and militants of the Cuban Communist Party whom I met in factories, hospitals, and schools were black. This also includes various departments of the government. For the average Cuban, this is normal. For myself and other revolutionaries from the United States, this was a pleasant surprise.

Outside of Cuba and, of course, Vietnam, the two foremost struggles that Cubans, black and white, identify with, are the guerrilla struggles in Latin America, and the black liberation struggle in the United States. Every Cuban I talked to wanted to know about Stokely Carmichael, the ghetto rebellions, SNCC, and especially the Partido Pantiera Negra, i.e., the Black Panther Party.

The escalation of interest in the

black struggle began with the attendance of Stokely Carmichael at the OLAS (Organization of Latin American Solidarity) conference in July of 1967. The conference coincided with the tremendous social explosions that rocked Newark and Detroit.

Another aspect of the sentiments and aspirations that rose to the surface after the Revolution is reflected in what could be called the cultural renaissance. This renaissance is spearheaded by black Cubans, and deals primarily with the African heritage of Cuba. Because the African roots of Cuban culture have always experienced some degree of suppression, it is only natural that this resurgence of interest take place.

The strength of the African roots stems in part from the methods that were used to subjugate the slaves in the 19th century. At that time, the Spanish slave-masters adopted the policy of dividing the slaves along ethnic group lines. This meant putting the Yorubas in one section of the plantation, the Carabali in another,

the Kongas someplace else, and so on. The Spanish didn't do this out of any respect for West African customs and culture, but because they thought that the maintenance of these ethnic divisions would lessen the chances of slave rebellions. The North American slavemasters had the same aim in mind, but they chose to destroy the values and customs of all ethnic groups rather than perpetuate them.

Some of these African religions and languages have been maintained in all their purity up to this day. This is particularly the case with the Yoruba ethnic group. Many black Cubans still practice the traditional religion of the Yorubas. In many cases, the songs and chants sung at the various religious ceremonies and feasts are identical to those used by the Yorubas in Western Nigeria.

Many black Cuban playwrights are using Yoruba themes in their plays. This has led to a number of actors and actresses learning poems and songs in the Yoruba language. According to one black writer, who is on the National Council of Culture, most Cubans are very eager to see any play carrying a Yoruba or West African theme.

While the YSA delegation was in Cuba, we were privileged to watch a performance of the National Folklore Group. The Group, which is all-black, put on several plays with Yoruba and West Indian themes.

To complement this renaissance, there is the Institute of Ethnology and Folklore. The IEF is part of the Academy of Sciences. Its main job is to develop a scientific analysis of the African roots of Cuban life. In its scientific research, the IEF is not only studying the influence of Africa on the Americas, but the history of West Africa itself, in terms of the development of the various ethnic groups and their languages. Nothing resembling the IEF existed before the Revolution. And I am sure that nothing like it exists in any other part of the Americas.

This is but a glimpse into the situation of Afro-Cubans. Even though it is just a glimpse, it is hoped that some clarity has been achieved because, in spite of the schemes of Yankee imperialism, the Cuban Revolution will continue to provide an example that will be emulated by oppressed peoples everywhere, particularly those of African descent.

Towards the Easter GI-Civilian Demonstrations

Ft. Jackson GIs Show the Way



With a guitar and an M-16, a Marine waits at landing strip for flight out of Khe Sanh. The "peace" talks haven't brought the GIs any closer to home, and with increasing determination, GIs everywhere want out.

By Larry Seigle

GI action against the war and in defense of GIs' right to free speech has reached a new level with the formation of a movement called GIs United Against the War at Ft. Jackson, South Carolina. GIs United is now circulating the petition we have reprinted on the next page and has drawn up the statement of aims which is printed below.

GIs United Against the War was formed in response to a campaign of harassment and intimidation by the brass aimed at a group of black GIs who got together to discuss the war and their rights, and to listen to some tapes of Malcolm X.

The army responded by trying to bar the GIs from meeting. They claimed that this was the "upper respiratory infection season," and therefore it was a health hazard to congregate in the barracks rooms. This didn't stop the men for long - they simply moved outside the barracks and met outdoors. Since then the danger of infection has apparently passed, and some meetings have been indoors.

The second phase of the Army's attack on the rights of the GIs was the arrest of a total of five men, all black, on various charges ranging

from disobeying a direct order to "go to bed" (!) to frame-up charges of assault. As of this writing, three of the five cases have been heard, resulting in one sentence of six-months at hard labor, one suspended sentence, and one less than honorable discharge.

A sixth black GI, Joe Miles, a member of the Young Socialist Alliance, was ordered transferred from Ft. Jackson to Ft. Bragg, North Carolina, and given three hours to get off the post!

As a result of this harassment,

what had begun as a group of black soldiers in one company, grew to involve white GIs, and reached out to draw in soldiers from all over the base.

The GIs decided to take the offensive. They began circulating a petition demanding the right to hold a meeting. And they drew up a statement outlining their views. Through the vehicle of the petition, the movement has spread like wildfire. Over 500 copies of the petition are circulating throughout the post. After the first day and a half, more than 200 signatures were turned in. The enthusiasm for the

petition, which clearly puts the brass on the spot, exceeded the expectations even of the guys who initiated it. The GIs are telling the brass that they intend to exercise their constitutional rights, and if the brass wants to stop them, they are going to have a hard time.

The rapid development of the movement at Ft. Jackson, and the widespread support and sympathy it found among GIs throughout the entire base, is an indication of the depth of anti-war feeling in the armed forces, and the potential GI participation that can be mobilized in such actions as the upcoming GI-led antiwar demonstrations set for Easter weekend. The movement at Ft. Jackson should make it crystal clear that the GIs who have demonstrated against the war in the past (most recently 500 on October 12, 1968, in San Francisco, and nearly 1000 across the country on October 26) are not simply isolated radicals or peaceniks who happen to be GIs. Rather they are, literally, the vanguard of what has already become a much larger movement, taking on mass proportions in at least some respects, among GIs. The April 6 demonstrations, in which GIs will march, uniting with other servicemen in each of the seven regional centers, joined and supported by civilians, will be the next crucial step forward in the development of this movement among GIs.

The GIs United Against the War at Ft. Jackson is organizing participation from Ft. Jackson for the April 6 action set in Atlanta. They will be joined by other GIs in actions across the country, and want the maximum possible civilian support. Join them.

For information on the Easter GI actions in your area, write to the Student Mobilization Committee, 857 Broadway, New York, New York 10003.

Feb. 16, 1969

To the Commanding General of Fort Jackson, South Carolina:

We the undersigned enlisted men, stationed at Fort Jackson, South Carolina request permission to hold an open meeting on post on 26 Feb 69, at which all those concerned can freely discuss the legal and moral questions related to the war in Vietnam and to the civil rights of American citizens both within and outside the armed forces. It is our intention to hold a peaceful, legal meeting open to any enlisted man or officer at Fort Jackson. We desire only to exercise the rights guaranteed to us as citizens and soldiers by the First Amendment to the U. S. Constitution.

We believe that the best way to avoid further incidents such as have occurred at Fort Jackson recently, is by full discussion and clarification of our rights as citizens. We hope that the authorities will cooperate with us in determining whether any infringement of the soldier's constitutional rights was involved in the following specific cases:

1. The summary arrests of Privates Madison, Toomer, and Davis of Co. B, 14th Bn, 4th CST Bde, and their confinement in the Post Stockade without trial.
2. Prohibition of group meetings in the barracks on the grounds of Upper Respiratory Infection Season, impeding the exercise of our right of assembly.
3. The hasty dispatch of members of an Infantry AIT Company in the 3rd Bde, to Vietnam, under armed guard without customary pre-embarkation leave.

One of the purposes of this meeting will be the preparation of a petition to the Department of the Army and Congress expressing the sentiment of the GI's attending the meeting about the war in Vietnam.

We would like to have an early response to our request so that appropriate arrangements can be made. If for any reason response is to be delayed we would like to know when we will have a response.

Copies of this petition will be sent to the Secretary of the Army, Secretary of Defense, and to the Senators of the undersigned.

GIs United Against the War: Statement of Aims

For the past half decade our country has been involved in a long, drawn-



out, costly and tragic war in Vietnam. Most Americans do not support this war — increasing numbers are demonstrating their opposition, including active duty GIs. It is the most unpopular war in our history. Yet the government's policy threatens to continue this tragedy for many years to come.

Meanwhile, our country suffers while the slaughter goes on. The vast resources and sums of money the government squanders in support of a corrupt dictatorship in Saigon belong to the American people. It should be used to improve America, to make our country the shining example all of us want it to be — a free society — free of poverty and hunger, free of racial oppression, free of slums and illiteracy, and the misery they produce.

In addition, the rights and dignity of the black man in America have been trampled upon for the past 400 years. While being called upon to fight and die for so-called freedom, he has been forced to suffer racial oppression, discrimination, and social degradation within as well as outside the armed forces. Many black GIs are becoming increasingly aware of the hypocrisy of fighting against other people of color who are struggling for the same rights of self-determination as they are. Afro-Americans and all oppressed national minorities have the unconditional right to control their lives and determine their destinies as they see fit.

We, as GIs, are forced to suffer most of all in the Vietnam fiasco. Many of us were drafted into the Army against our will — nearly all of us are kept in its grasp against our will — all in order to carry out this illegal, immoral and unjust war. We are forced to fight and die in a war we did not create and in which we don't believe.

This is not to mention the tens of thousands of innocent Vietnamese who are dying at our hands, many of them killed only because we can no longer tell the difference between them and our "enemies".

While all of this goes on, the Army continues to trample on our rights as well as our lives. All the crap, the harassment, dehumanization and contempt for the enlisted man that make "F. T. A." the three most popular letters in the Army goes on full swing in the Nam, just like it does here. Inspections, haircuts, saluting the brass, etc., are all part of the grind. And there's a reason for it: the Army has to crush our spirit; it has to stamp the humanity and individuality out of us so we won't be able to fight back. This is an undemocratic war — the only way it can be fought is with an undemocratic army, where GIs can not be allowed to think, to discuss the war and speak out against it, to influence and control policy.

But it is our right to be human. No one can take that from us — no one has the right to rob us of our dignity, like the army tries to do every day. It is our right to think, and to speak out against an unjust war, to demonstrate our opposition if that is necessary. We are citizens of America even if the army would like to forget it, and these rights are guaranteed by the Constitution of the U. S.

The army wants to take away our rights, to keep us from exercising them, so they can make us fight a war we don't want any part of. But the Constitution says they can't do that. If we stand up for our rights and use them, the army can not stop us. If we speak out and demonstrate our opposition to the dirty war in Vietnam, no one can stop us. If we get together,

and if we go out and get the support of civilians, who are also against the war, we can defend our rights and make our grievances known effectively. If we get together we can win.

Some of us have already begun to do this. We have come together as *GIs United Against the War in Vietnam* in order to organize ourselves to defend our rights and help bring all the troops home from Vietnam now! If you agree with us, join with us. Together we can tell the truth about the Army and war, and use that truth to make us free!

This is *your* thing, so help spread the good word!



continued from p. 5

a struggle for socialist democracy unfolded that had the support of the mass of Czech students and workers. Afraid that the example of this anti-bureaucratic and anti-Stalinist movement would spread to the rest of Eastern Europe and even to the Soviet Union itself, the Soviet bureaucracy launched an invasion of 500,000 troops, using the official justification that the action was taken to preserve Czechoslovakia from a capitalist restoration — an allegation that flew right in the face of the facts. This invasion served only to weaken socialism by tending to discredit it in the eyes of the world's workers. If Moscow was really interested in fighting capitalism, it would have stepped up aid to Vietnam and to Cuba, instead of trying to crush socialist democracy in Czechoslovakia.

Castro's acceptance of the Soviet rationalization of the invasion involved a fundamental miscalculation of the events in Czechoslovakia.

This question will be a continuing problem for the Cubans. One-third of humanity lives in post-capitalist societies, whose potential is blocked by the existence of privileged bureaucratic castes. The struggle for socialist democracy will continue to develop; to institute workers control and proletarian democracy, these bureaucracies must be overthrown. As these inevitable struggles take place, the Cuban revolutionaries will continue to face the question of which of the contending sides to support.

To show that the revolutionary leadership can be wrong on an important question is also to point up the need for structured forms of workers democracy in Cuba. Most basic decision-making in Cuba is done at the top, primarily by the party leaders. There is growing authority of local organizations, like the Committees for the Defense of the Revolution, but this is primarily in the area of administration — not political decision.

There is absolutely no truth in the claims of "totalitarianism" mouthed by the U. S. bourgeois press. In numer-

ous, and fundamental, respects, the Cuban masses have much more freedom than the students and workers in this country.

But the revolution has much to develop in the area of organized forms of workers democracy. Developing a socialist revolution is not an easy task, especially in the situation faced by Cuba today. It is only natural that different approaches, held by individuals or groups with equal dedication and loyalty to the revolution, will develop. This has already happened in Cuba on several questions. The most efficient and democratic way to handle such differences of opinion is through an orderly process of debate, guided by the rules of democratic centralism, in the Communist Party and the mass organizations. The new, united Communist Party of Cuba does not yet have the Leninist norms and procedures for settling political policy through membership discussion and vote.

Socialist democracy is not an abstract moral question; history has shown that it is the indispensable



Mechanized cane loaders, in use throughout the island, have eliminated one of the most backbreaking and difficult chores. Most of the cane is still cut by hand, but the Cubans have set a high priority on the development of a workable and efficient cane cutting machine.



Ever since the YSA was organized in 1960, defense of the Cuban revolution has been a central part of its activities. Here, the Fair Play for Cuba Committee, in which the YSA participated, demonstrates in front of the UN during the Missile Crisis in October, 1962.

means to revolutionary ends. The Cubans project a course of emerging from economic underdevelopment through an egalitarian society, and

of continuing to support every battle against imperialism. With such a perspective, the involvement and the training of the masses of Cubans in the process of revolutionary decision-making will be crucial.

The effective defense of a revolution requires an objective view by its supporters. The method of sliding over difficulties or ignoring mistakes is a disservice to any revolution, and does nothing to strengthen it. Just the opposite is the case. The unvarnished truth is the best weapon—the revolutionaries need it to effectively fight capitalism and imperialism.

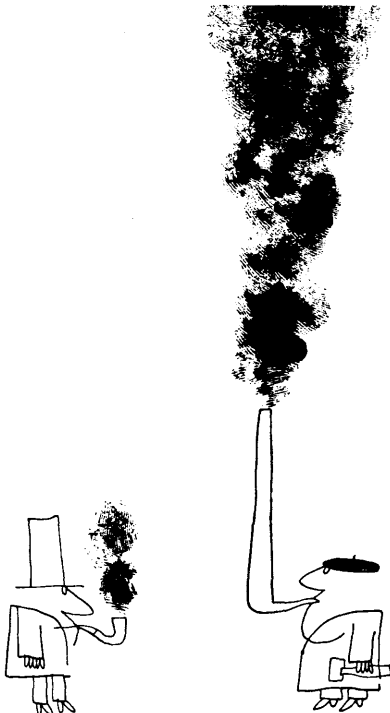
On balance, taking into account the difficulties and shortcomings, the Cuban revolution stands as an historic achievement for all mankind. A socialist revolution has been made and consolidated 90 miles from the United States. The Cuban people have stood up to attack by the imperialist enemy and have maintained the revolution in spite of all obstacles. They've produced the tremendous advances of the revolution, and revealed the unlimited potential of a planned economy based on revolutionary conscious-

ness.

For the Cuban people, and particularly the new generation, there can be no going back. The future of the Cuban revolution is inextricably tied in with the future of the world revolution; the final solution to Cuba's problems lies in the world socialist revolution. However hard the work, Cubans carry it out with the expectation that the revolution will occur in other countries, bringing new allies and taking the pressure off Cuba. The best defense of the revolution in Cuba is the building and strengthening of the revolutionary movement throughout the rest of the world.

And that includes the U. S. A. There were thirteen members of the YSA in our delegation, we came from a dozen different cities. YSA chapters are now organizing big regional tours for the Cuba travelers, arranging meetings on hundreds of campuses and high schools.

We'll be speaking about a small country of seven million people which has made a socialist revolution. Our message will be to learn about it, defend it, and emulate it.



cont'd from p. 2

only thing stolen in Cuba is second base. Although not literally true, I have never felt safer walking the streets of a city at night than I felt in Cuba.

Joining the Party

The revolutionary enthusiasm of Cubans, and particularly the youth, strikes you immediately. We asked hundreds of young people if they were members of the Union of Young Communists (UJC). If they were not members we often got replies like "I'm not a member yet" or "My application is pending" or "I'm not a hard enough worker yet." Everyone knows that the hardest workers, the most militant and revolutionary members of Cuban society are the ones who are selected for membership in the UJC or the Communist Party.

To join the Communist Party of Cuba one must be first an exemplary worker. Then at a mass meeting at his work center a companero's name may be put in nomination. There is a full discussion of his work, attitude, consciousness. The Party section then goes over the names and at another meeting brings back its recommendations. At that mass meeting there is further discussion and the workers voice their approval or disapproval of the report from the Party. If you can't gain the approval of your fellow workers, you can't be a member of the Party. I know of no other revolutionary or Communist Party in the world which uses this method for selection of its members.



The Young Socialist delegation in Cuba: Standing (left to right) Derrick Morrison, New York; Joel Britton, Los Angeles; Paul McKnight, San Francisco; Evelyn Kirsch, Detroit; Lou Pepper, Madison; Linda Jenness, Atlanta; Mareen Jasin, Philadelphia; Dan Rosenshine, New York; Stewart Singer, Boston; Seated: Dave Prince, Cleveland; Will Reissner, Seattle; Derrel Myers, Minneapolis; Robin Maisel, Chicago.



Cuban pigs.

Photo by Kirsch

One evening we saw an arrest made. It was the night before New Years Eve and while walking up the street towards the Habana Libre (formerly the Hilton) we thought we heard gun shots. Militia and people on guard duty had run from all around and there was a crowd gathered around a car stopped in the middle of the street. A Department of the Interior Patrolman was asking the crowd to disperse. The crowd melted away, obviously having no fear that there would be any victimizations. Besides, it didn't look as if there were any gusanos around who needed taking care of.

It turned out that two men had been drinking to excess and had a fight. To scare the other, one of them had shot off his gun. He wasn't frisked, clubbed or dragged away. Instead the Patrol asked him to drive the car down the block to avoid a traffic jam. They held a fifteen minute discussion about the duty of every revolutionary in such a situation going to the municipal building to fill out the appropriate forms and face the penalties for endangering the lives of others and causing a public disturbance.

As a resident of Chicago, home of Richard "shoot to kill" Daley, the whole affair was completely outside my experience.

Malcolm X University?

Then there was the scene at the University of Havana of a Black coed standing in front of the statue of Alma Mater with a sub-machine gun. That is one campus where Gov. Reagan and his piglets can't go.

It was reported to me that there is a great deal of jubilation at the University when it is announced that all the students will be going to the countryside

for 45 days of agricultural work.

On Sundays in the green belt there are thousands of city dwellers doing voluntary labor, growing coffee and citrus fruit and beans. A lot more than a tree grows in Havana—because the city folk have learned a lot about where their food comes from.

One Sunday we went to see a church. We just popped in, unannounced, and observed. There were a couple of hundred people at the service, mostly in their forties, fifties and sixties. But we also noticed a few dozen younger people in their twenties and small children who were altar boys or sang in the choir. By and large the young people do not go to church. The government attitude toward religion is that if you want to believe that mumbo-jumbo that is your right.

As Norteamericanos we were greeted with a great deal of curiosity. At the Moncada City School in Santiago, Joel Britton of Los Angeles told a little boy about 5 or 6 that we were from the United States. As if by reflex, the kid hauled back and hit Joel right in the leg. But he was an exception. While there is tremendous hatred for the American government which murders colonial people struggling for liberation all over the globe, there is warm affection for the American people. Everyone was concerned about what would happen to us when we got back to the United States.

Those Hijackings

While we were in Cuba eight planes were hijacked to the island. It was not front page news except in Santiago where there was a bit of flurry since getting

a plane diverted to Santiago was a new experience. The Cuban government has no official policy on the hijacking of planes. They don't encourage it but they would never dream of sending back a refugee from imperialism.

The day after Children's Day, when the youngsters get toys, there were a lot of kids dressed in guerrilla uniforms or the Mabise uniform of the fighters in the first war of independence of 1868.

There are no statues to living revolutionaries in Cuba. That was one of the first laws passed by the Revolutionary Government in 1959. But pictures of Che and Camilo Cienfeugos are to be seen everywhere, as well as pictures of other revolutionaries.

We Saw the Future, and it Works

The New Left critics often speak of the American workers as reactionary clods who will never make a revolution. Walking down a street in any city of Cuba you pass thousands of revolutionaries. In the early 1950's Fidel was also criticized for believing that the Cubans could make a revolution. Being in a country full of comrades spoils you a bit for the return trip.

When we got on the good ship Cameguy for the return trip to our homes we got our first re-introduction to American life from a Florida TV station. There was a tiger telling us to run down to our neighborhood store and buy frosted corn flakes. The boat trip was a journey from the future back into the past.

—Robin Maisel

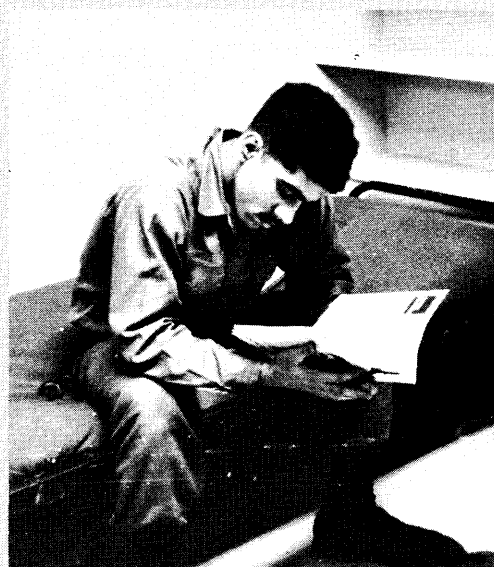
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