

# A Socialist ACTION

Inside:

Nov. 6 blues . . . . .2  
Canada elections . . .4  
Pope vs. Marx . . . . .6  
Greenmall . . . . .13

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## Antiwar activists unite for April demonstrations

By CARL FINAMORE

CLEVELAND—The September 14-16 Emergency National Conference Against U.S. Military Intervention in Central America and the Caribbean voted overwhelmingly to begin the process of organizing mass demonstrations in Washington, D.C., San Francisco, and Los Angeles on April 20, 1985.

Three days of debates, discussions, and workshops ended with a "Call to Action" urging the entire movement "to unite in sponsoring, planning, and building the largest possible demonstrations in these three cities."

**Meeting following Ohio conference sets April 12-15 date. See editorial p. 2**

The conference also approved local actions from Oct. 20 to 28 against the U.S. invasion of Grenada and anti-intervention demonstrations at federal buildings after election day (regardless of who wins the election) on Nov. 10.

Over 650 antiwar activists, trade unionists, and representatives from many other social movements from 20 states registered at the three-day conference. They came from 88 peace and 116 solidarity organizations. There were 175 trade unionists from 49 unions in attendance. Most plenary sessions were attended by 300 to 400 activists.

Trade unionists played an important role in the initiation, preparation, and organization of the conference. Union officials like Ron Weisen, president of United Steelworkers of America Local 1397; Joe Lindenmuth, president of USWA Local 2265; Al Lannon, president of International Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 6; Dave Dyson, secretary of the National Labor Committee in Support of Democracy and Human Rights in El Salvador (with 23

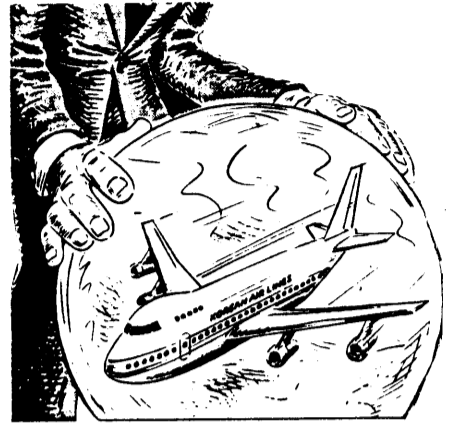


Marching women support striking British coal miners. See related story on page 4.

international union affiliates); Suzanne Kelly, staff representative of the Virginia Education Association/NEA; Ed Mann, retired president of USWA Local 1462, and others joined in the workshop and floor debates with peace, religious, and antinuclear activists.

Several alternative action proposals and amendments were discussed and debated by the conference participants. The democratic organization of the sessions guaranteed every action proposal equal treatment. Every person had

(continued on page 3)



## K.A.L. 007: U.S. silence says it all

By MARK HARRIS

"A terroristic act of utter barbarity."

That is how the U.S. government and the big-business media described the shooting down by Soviet aircraft of Korean Air Lines Flight 007 on Aug. 31, 1983.

The incident, which occurred over the Soviet Union, took the lives of 269 people. The first anniversary of this tragic event has been cause for more excoriations of the "evil empire" to the East. But there is another story, one certain to raise the wrath of the Pentagon brass, that is beginning to see the light.

David Pearson, a Ph.D. candidate at Yale University who is doing a dissertation on the Defense Department's World Wide Military Command and Control System, has spent the last year researching the available technical literature on K.A.L. 007's ill-fated journey. Pearson presents his research in a remarkable article in the Aug. 18-25 issue of *The Nation* entitled "K.A.L. 007, What the U.S. Knew And When We Knew It."

His conclusion? There was nothing "accidental" about K.A.L. 007's intrusion into Soviet airspace. Rather, the airliner made a "deliberate, carefully planned intrusion into Soviet territory with the knowledge of U.S. military and intelligence agencies."

It is likely, Pearson concludes, that "a conscious policy decision was made by the U.S. government—at what level it is not clear—to risk the lives of 269 innocent people on the assumption that an extraordinary opportunity for glean- ing intelligence information should not be missed . . ."

Pearson says it is likely that U.S. intelligence did not expect the Soviets to shoot down the airliner. And the U.S. now admits it is true that the Soviets did not know that the aircraft was a civilian passenger plane. What the intelligence agencies sought was to use K.A.L. 007's intrusion into Soviet airspace to activate Soviet radar and defenses, thus providing a valuable opportunity to monitor Soviet responses.

### Unanswered questions

There was nothing routine about Flight 007 right from the start. The plane left Anchorage 40 minutes behind schedule, a delay that has never been explained. The pilot added 9800 pounds of fuel that were not needed nor

(continued on page 6)

## South Africa revolt runs deep

By LARRY COOPERMAN

Police violence against rioting South African miners has continued to rack the gold mines surrounding Johannesburg. On Sept. 18, in confrontations that accompanied the first legal strike ever carried out by Black miners, seven miners were killed by police in Westonaria. This brought the overall death toll in recent weeks to 56. More than 350 miners were injured during the strike, while new waves of social protest by Blacks in Soweto, Sharpesville, and other huge shanty towns that ring the

industrial areas have also resulted in deaths and injuries.

The new round of violent resistance was stimulated by the recent South African elections. The elections, which began last Aug. 22, were also marked by a huge abstention rate, the product of a successful boycott campaign. Only 18 percent of potential non-white voters, or 30 percent of eligible voters, participated in the apartheid regime's attempt to introduce cosmetic reforms into its racist structure. P.W. Botha, the prime minister, lamented: "A good number of Coloureds [the apartheid regime's term

for Africans of mixed descent] still show little interest in the exercise of their democratic rights."

The elections to a new three-chamber, racially segregated parliament were the result of constitutional "reforms" introduced by the South African government. These reforms maintained the legal exclusion of Blacks from even the most basic citizenship rights while establishing two new powerless chambers of parliament to represent Indians and Coloureds.

(continued on page 5)

**Forum: Socialism and Democracy see pp. 7-10**

# Build local coalitions for mass spring mobilizations

In a recent interview, Democratic candidate Walter Mondale said that if elected in November he would "quarantine" Nicaragua. He insisted that if Nicaragua "continued to export revolution in Central America" he would "be forced" to respond with such a measure.

Mondale also told reporters that he too would have invaded Grenada—as Ronald Reagan did exactly one year ago—in order "to go in there and pro-

tect American lives."

If any further proof is needed that both the Democrats and the Republicans are the parties of war and intervention, this is it. Shortly after Mondale's declaration, a headline appeared in Nicaragua in a pro-FSLN daily stating that "Reagan, Mondale, It's the same thing!"

The bipartisan war drive against the people of Central America will step up

after November, no matter who wins the elections.

## Meeting sets April action

The September 14-16 Cleveland emergency antiwar conference marked a tremendous step forward in building a unified and massive antiwar movement. [See article page 1.] Following this conference, on Sept. 25, a meeting of peace and religious groups was held in Washington, D.C., to discuss a common spring action against U.S. intervention.

The Sept. 25 meeting voted for national mobilizations in Washington, D.C., for the weekend of April 12-15, 1985. The meeting proposed that a

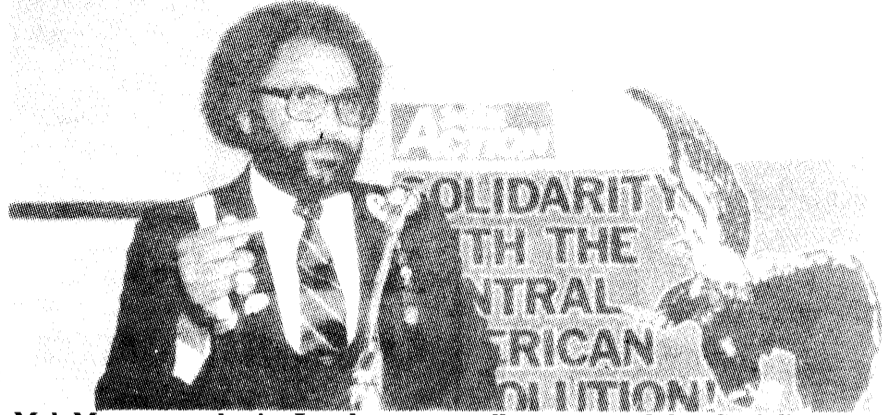
steering committee of several peace organizations meet again on Oct. 23 to decide between Saturday, April 13, or Sunday, April 14, as the date for the massive spring demonstration.

The organizations attending the meeting included the National Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy (SANE), the Fellowship of Reconciliation, the Mobilization for Survival, the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES), the World Peace Council, and others. Representatives of the Cleveland emergency conference attended the meeting and were given voice but no vote.

The meeting was another important step on the difficult road toward building a common spring mass-action date. Although many serious questions remain to be worked out (such as establishing a democratic coalition structure), the differences on a date for the mass demonstrations seem to have narrowed to simply selecting April 13 or April 14. Representatives of the Cleveland conference indicated they would drop the April 20 date in favor of April 13.

They are encouraging activists to begin building local coalitions in support of the fall action program passed by the Cleveland emergency conference as the best way to build for a united mass spring mobilization. ■

## Vote SWP: Mel Mason and Andrea Gonzalez!



Socialist Action—London

Mel Mason speaks in London to a rally sponsored by *Socialist Action*, a newsweekly published by Labour Party supporters.

The Socialist Workers Party candidates, Mel Mason for president and Andrea Gonzalez for vice president, are running on a program of opposition to the U.S. war drive in Central America and to the bipartisan attacks on working people in this country. The SWP candidates advance the idea that the labor movement should organize its own political party— independent of the capitalist parties. *Socialist Action* calls on our readers to vote Mason-Gonzalez on Nov. 6.

# Mondale/Reagan dodge real issues

By MARK HARRIS

Long on rhetoric, short in substance, and designed to deceive—the 1984 presidential election is shaping up as a seemingly never-ending exercise in national befuddlement.

Republican President Ronald Reagan hopes to bedazzle voters with the shine of his economic recovery. Democratic challenger Walter Mondale seeks to beguile the electorate with his feigned concern for the rights of working people. But the "choice" between company-man Mondale and country-club Reagan still leaves working people in the poor house.

There are actually more people unemployed today than when Reagan took office. Programs for poor people have been trimmed to the bone. Cities are deteriorating as the housing and education crisis deepens. Spending for nuclear weapons has increased 196 percent since 1981. The United States has invaded Grenada, hundreds of U.S. soldiers have been killed in Lebanon, and the threat of U.S. troops being sent to Central America hangs like a dark cloud over the political scene.

Ronald Reagan cheerfully promises more of the same for the next four years while Walter Mondale somberly offers the same old promises of 1976 and 1980.

Reagan leads Mondale by 13 percentage points in the polls (as of Sept. 18), but it is worth noting that Reagan's "popularity" among many voters does not extend to his actual stand on many issues. A majority of the American people, for example, are opposed to U.S. involvement in Central America. A majority of people support the right to abortion. Both of these issues find Reagan with a definite minority view. Reagan's "Father knows best" image may have its advantages with some voters over Mondale's more staid personality, but if that is a plus for Reagan it also reflects the ill-defined focus of this campaign in terms of the real issues confronting working people in 1984.

Unlike past Democratic campaigns, Walter Mondale's 1984 campaign heralds no "New Deal" or "Great Society" designed to galvanize the working-class

vote. Even the "Human Rights" slogan of the Carter days now takes a backseat to the interests of "national security."

In their place Mondale offers—the "Big Tax Increase."

### No new spending programs

Moreover, lest there be any illusion that Mondale's deficit-cutting plan will rechannel funds into social programs, he has stated that he will establish a "deficit reduction trust fund" that will "only be used for the reduction of the deficit—not for new spending programs."

As Rich Jaroslovksy observed in *The Wall Street Journal* (Sept. 11, 1984), Mondale's "pledge to use the tax increases only for deficit reduction might dash the hopes of some who thought he would favor expansive new social programs."



Mondale and Ferraro offer little, in essence, that differs from the Republican profit-plan for big business. *Business Week* (July 30, 1984) observes that Mondale's budget blueprint is "a far cry from the traditional Democratic approach."

He has "abandoned the Democrats' proclivity to fund social programs by squeezing the military."

He says that "only part of the

Reagan cuts in social spending can be restored."

And in fact, he "is already being advised to call for new budget cuts."

W. Michael Blumenthal, former Treasury secretary under Carter and now chairman of Burroughs Corp., told *Business Week* that Mondale would face the same pressures Carter faced that forced him to back off from many of his campaign pledges and move steadily to the right. Not that there are concrete proposals for expanded social programs to back off from. But rest assured, any campaign rhetoric designed to cull the votes of working-class voters will remain just that—campaign rhetoric.

*Business Week* notes that "Mondale recognizes that his campaign budget is inadequate and that more cuts, including trims in entitlement programs, are needed."

Blumenthal, for his part, isn't worried. "I am certain that he knows what has to be done."

The Democrats' platform this year, for example, drops any mention of a national health program, one of the standard sops used to win votes in past campaigns, if never seriously acted upon. John J. Fialka writes in *The Wall Street Journal* (Sept. 12, 1984) that while both candidates talk in "bland generalities" about protecting Medicare and reducing health-care costs, the "experts" agree that "major revenue increases and benefit cuts will have to be imposed in coming years, along with cost controls that could reduce the availability of some medical procedures."

Who is elected will not change what is cut.

### Bipartisan austerity drive

The ruling rich are intent on pressing their drive to impose takebacks in union contracts, cut the cost of social programs for the poor and workers, and expand the military budget. Hand in hand with this bipartisan austerity drive goes a persistent campaign to overcome the effects of the "Vietnam syndrome" that stands as an obstacle to cultivating a public climate favorable to the use of U.S. troops in Central America and elsewhere.

But few people in this country are beating the drums for war in Central America. And working people certainly do not want lower wages and harder working conditions. The more vocal presence of the right wing does not indicate a general shift to the right by the majority of working people. Rather it

signifies a shift to the right by both the Democratic and Republican parties, which invariably has dragged along a sector of the population.

Many on the left argue that as inadequate as Mondale may be, he is a far better alternative than four more years of Reagan. But the "lesser evil" logic is having a rough go in this election. The "lesser evil" idea reduces itself, in the last analysis, to the rather feeble wish that the best we can hope for is a change of reins in the White House that will mean a letup, but not a halt, to the blows working people are taking.

But the pessimists forget that workers are more than just a punching bag for the rich and powerful people who run this country. The working class has the *potential* to face the ruling rich head on—and win. There is little doubt that the coming years will witness a new era of social militancy by working people and their allies. This time around, a new labor upsurge could well lead to something new on the American scene—a labor political party that reshapes American politics as workers fight to preserve and extend their rights against an evermore rapacious capitalist class. ■

## Socialist Action

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Editor: ALAN BENJAMIN  
Associate Editors: MARK HARRIS  
MICHAEL SCHREIBER  
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# Grenada: One year of U.S. rule

By KWAME M.A. SOMBURU and  
ZAKIYA SOMBURU

One year ago, on Oct. 25, 1983, the United States launched an invasion of the small Black nation of Grenada that cost the lives of several hundred Grenadians, Cubans, and U.S. Marines. Both the Democratic and Republican parties supported the invasion, and it received only a few squeaks of protest from some of the "progressive" members of the Congressional Black Caucus.

According to Kendrick Radix, a former minister in the revolutionary government and a supporter of murdered prime minister Maurice Bishop, a large proportion of Grenadians initially also welcomed the invasion. They believed the U.S. troops might free them from the terror imposed by the reactionary coup led by Deputy Prime Minister Bernard Coard.

In an interview in the Cuban weekly *Granma* (July 8, 1984), Radix pointed out that "The early pictures that showed smiling people and waving hands welcoming the invaders are to be seen in the psychological climate that existed then. As a matter of fact, this doesn't exist anymore—it's a thing of the past—as people feel the occupation and control, the unemployment, the lack of social facilities, the sense of despair and collapse, the lack of true democracy."

The presence of some 350 U.S.

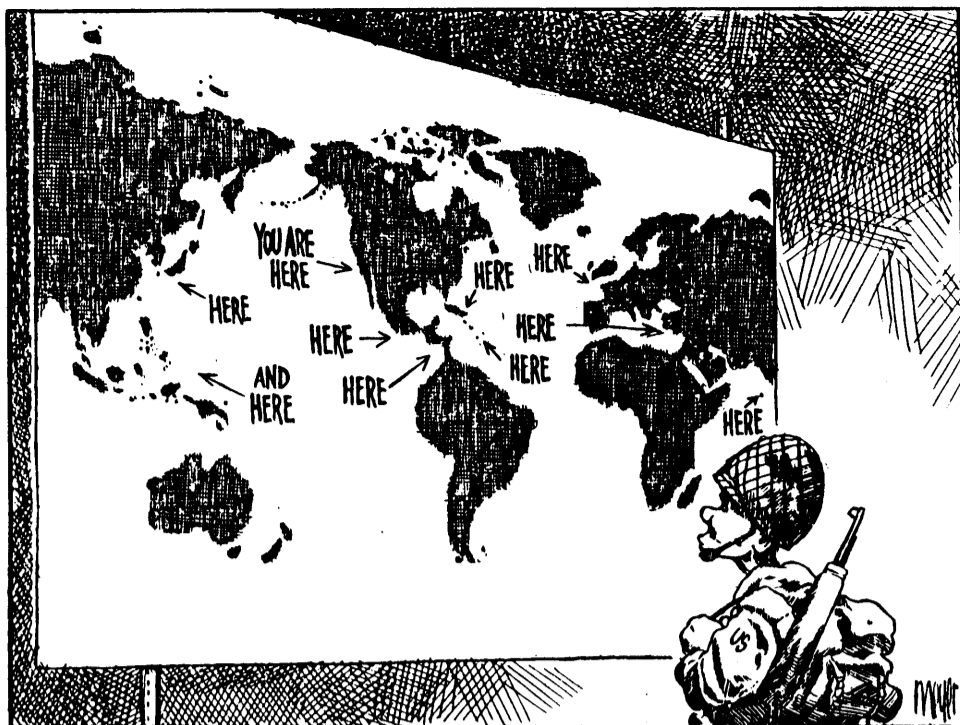
troops on the island has enabled the ruling Interim Advisory Council to dismantle many of the social services, popular organizations, and progressive measures that working people had won during the revolution. Private employers have been emboldened by the rollback of pro-labor laws. Trade union militants have been singled out for special victimization.

"Our people for the first time in four-and-a-half years are really hungry," Radix says. "Unemployment is somewhat over 40 percent as opposed to 12 percent previously."

## The rationale of racism

Radix charges the occupation authorities with attempting to recreate Grenada's former semicolonial state of dependence. "Racism is a very important element in analyzing this," he comments. "In the same way that they have invaded tiny Grenada with impunity, the international community could in fact—using the same rationale—tell them to invade South Africa, where millions of Black people are being killed every day by racists and economically exploited by apartheid."

There have been confrontations between Grenadians and the occupying troops, resulting in arrests and several killings. Nevertheless, trade union activity has revived, and a section of the population has begun to openly express interest in politics. At a public rally on



May 27, a new party—the Maurice Bishop Patriotic Movement (MBPM)—was launched. It is led by Radix, George Louison, and other revolutionary leaders who survived the October 1983 massacre.

A 24-page manifesto issued by the MBPM calls for an independent and democratic nation; free education and medical care; the right to a job and housing for every Grenadian; strong mass organizations among women, youth, and other sectors of the population; maintenance of pro-labor laws and support to the trade union movement; and the building of a "mixed economy," with state, cooperative, and private sectors.

Several organizations in the United States are planning activities this month to protest the U.S. invasion and the

murder of Maurice Bishop and the other revolutionary leaders. Grenada solidarity work will be discussed at the Sept. 29-30 conference of California chapters of the National Black Independent Political Party. The Emergency National Conference Against U.S. Intervention [see page 1] called for actions Oct. 20-28 to condemn the U.S. invasion of Grenada and to demand the withdrawal of U.S. troops.

It is imperative to gather, discuss, and analyze the Grenadian revolution, the factors that led to its overthrow and the measures that can lead to the rejuvenation of a revolutionary movement. In addition, we in this country have a special obligation to demand that U.S. troops be withdrawn—so that Grenadians can once again determine their own destiny. ■

## ...Antiwar activists unite

(continued from page 1)

voice, vote, and the right to submit resolutions.

A Friday evening panel on "Strategy Questions Before the Anti-Intervention Movement" reflected the variety of concerns discussed throughout the conference. Ron Weisen said, "It's a rich man's war against the people of Central America. We'll say no—we already gave in Vietnam."

Speaking about the failure of top union leaders to lead a fightback against concessions, Weisen said, "We have to stop shaking hands with management and start shaking our fists."

Jane Slaughter, a *Labor Notes* staff writer, spoke on the bipartisan nature of the war drive. "Vietnam didn't become an issue to either party until a mass movement developed... No matter what happens on Nov. 6, there'll be a war on in 1985... Our job is to organize a movement... to stop the war in Central America."

Eugene Carroll, labor coordinator of the National Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign, reflected the other side of the debate on the elections when he said, "I'm supporting Mondale in order to get rid of Reagan... The election of Mondale will at least buy a little time for the dying people in El Salvador and Nicaragua."

However, Carroll and other individual Mondale supporters like Al Lannon also firmly stated their belief that the action proposals should remain non-partisan in order to preserve the unity in action of the whole anti-intervention movement.

In fact, the conference rejected a proposal to endorse the Midwest Illinois Nuclear Weapons Freeze-initiated Oct. 13 rally in Chicago because of its stated purpose "to highlight the issue of peace in the upcoming elections."

"Vote for Peace, we'll remember in November" is prominently featured in all the rally publicity, in addition to the slogans of "Nuclear Freeze now," "Meet

human needs," and "No more Vietnams."

Instead, the conference majority inserted wording into the major fall and spring action program which restated the fact that "our action proposal is non-partisan in nature and calls for actions which are independent of the election process."

At the same time the action proposal applauded the aspirations of those who

Beth Perry, national representative of the Coalition in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES), and Leslie Cagan, program coordinator for the Mobilization for Survival, objected to the conference setting a date for a spring action. They indicated that several peace groups, not directly involved in the Emergency Conference, were also considering plans for a spring mobilization that would be discussed at a Sept. 25 meeting in Washington D.C. They offered an amendment to delete the April 20, 1985, date from the conference-approved action proposal.

Supporters of the April 20 date

upon the whole movement. The April 20 spring action resolution was framed as a "call upon the movement against U.S. military intervention in Central America/the Caribbean to join together in united actions."

The delegates voted to reaffirm the April 20 date for massive national protests. Immediately following the vote, Mauricio Perez, official representative of the FMLN/FDR, gave greetings to the conference.

A broad show of unity was reflected in Sunday's panel with speakers Leslie Cagan, Beth Perry, Dave Dyson, and Al Lannon. Perry stated her "solidarity with this conference."

She said, "We stand united to build the biggest spring mobilization to get the United States out of Central America."

In similar fashion, Leslie Cagan said it was a "critical task to find the way to unify our movement."

Jerry Gordon then reported on plans to send a delegation from the elected continuations committee to attend the Sept. 25 meeting of peace groups to urge their support for the April 20 date. Although no one has yet objected to the date of April 20, the conference indicated its flexibility if a better date is suggested to unite the movement.

Gordon repeated the position of the delegates that it "was never our intention to set up a separate apparatus. We want one single, united structure with one single, overriding consideration of the continuations committee as it negotiates with other forces—that there will be one single, united spring mobilization."

In addition to its task of forging unity around a common date for a spring mobilization, the continuations committee was authorized to call another national antiwar conference sometime after the April 20 action.

As the last session ended and activists returned to their local areas to build coalitions in support of the fall and spring protests, the several hundred delegates cheered the prospect that a truly broad and united demonstration of opposition to the war danger was in the making. ■



Panel of speakers addressing Emergency National Conference in Cleveland, Ohio. From left to right are Joe Lindenmuth, president USWA Local 2265; Ione Biggs, vice president Women Speak Out for Peace and Justice; Jerry Gordon, international representative UFCW and one of the conference coordinators; and Norma Hannah, a representative from Cleveland CISPES.

will march on Oct. 13 for peace and justice.

Unity was the major theme of the conference. In his opening remarks to the Saturday session, conference organizer Jerry Gordon, an international representative of the United Food and Commercial Workers Union, stated that "the potential for a broad antiwar coalition is enormous, but we must be unified. The method of achieving unity is open discussion and debate within the movement..."

pointed out that no new coalition or separate organizations were being advocated to substitute for existing peace groups. But new forces, such as the unions, were coming into opposition to the war drive, and a broader, united coalition—bigger than anything currently organized—was required.

These activists didn't want to pass up the opportunity for the conference to register its commitment to a specific spring action date that could be urged

# Canada

## Conservative victory challenges labor

TORONTO—It was an electoral landslide for the Progressive Conservative Party on Sept. 4—but not an ideological sweep.

Led by former Iron Ore Corp. President Brian Mulroney, the Conservatives captured a record 211 parliamentary seats and 50 percent of the popular vote. The Liberal Party, which has held the reins of federal government for most of the past 20 years, was reduced to 40 seats and 28 percent of the votes.

The labor-based New Democratic Party (NDP) surprised many observers by holding its share of the vote (19 percent) and winning 30 seats.

The desire for change was massive and undeniable. Big-business lawyer John Turner, short-lived successor to Pierre Trudeau as prime minister, couldn't shake the legacy of continuing high unemployment (11 percent) and high interest rates (14 percent). Dogged by a last-minute flurry of Trudeau patronage appointments, Turner, the Liberal Party candidate, opened the election campaign by appealing to conservative business interests. Adverse public response forced him to reverse direction.

Even the Conservatives felt compelled to promise to preserve social programs. High-profile, ultraright-wing Tories who argued otherwise went down to defeat, despite the electoral swing to their party elsewhere. It was that kind of election.

### NDP policies coopted

Basically, it was the NDP, the party linked to the trade unions in English Canada, that set the agenda for debate in the election. Its issues became the key issues: jobs, fair taxes, peace, and women's rights—despite the media's initial concentration on leadership personalities.

But the Liberals and the Conservatives proceeded to coopt NDP policies. Unfortunately, this was not difficult to do given the staunchly reformist character of the NDP's critique of the capitalist parties.

However, in view of the ruling class's crisis of confidence in the Liberal Party, the NDP had a golden opportunity not only to hold its own, but to break through and overtake the Liberals.

In fact, west of Ontario, the NDP did establish itself as the second major party. And in several Ontario ridings [Canadian electoral districts] with a significant industrial and unionized social base, the NDP captured seats from the Liberals.

### NDP fails in Quebec

But Quebec was a different story. The French-speaking province, an oppressed nation within the Canadian Confederation, virtually ignored the NDP. There, the Conservatives capitalized on the collapse of the traditional Liberal fortress, surging to 58 seats from only one in the 1980 election.

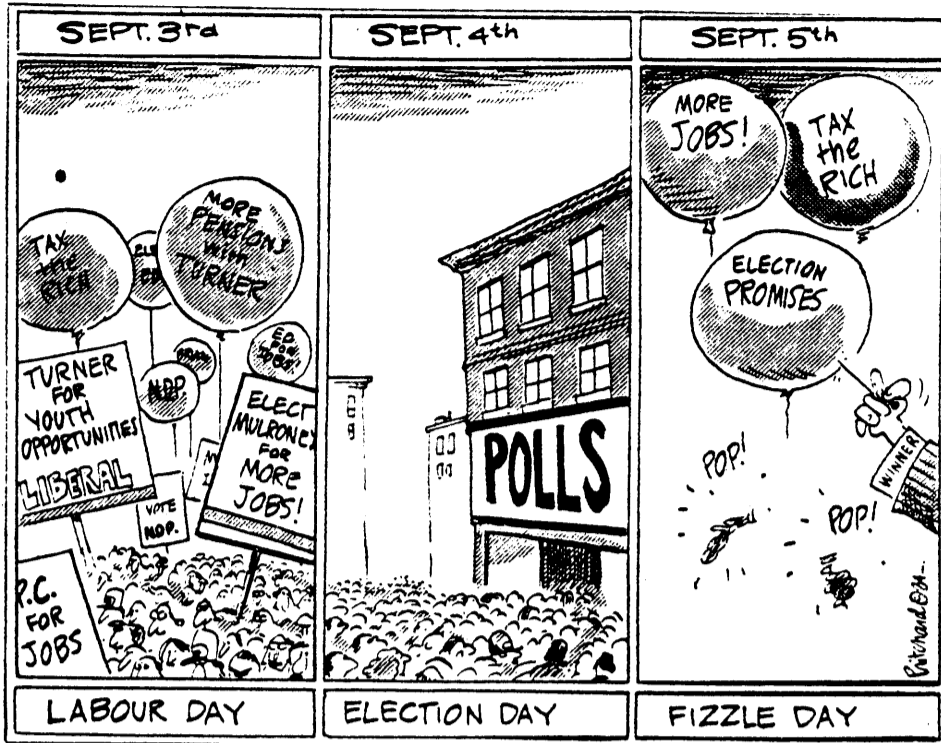
The historically Anglo-dominated Tories attracted a number of nationalist candidates, presented a leader who is both a native Quebecer and fluent in French, and as a party enjoyed the tacit support of the bourgeois-nationalist Parti Quebecois provincial government.

Meanwhile, John Turner fanned growing disaffection with his own Liberal Party in Quebec by taking a particularly hard line against provincial rights and against those he called "separatists" among the Tory candidates. The backfire from this approach left the Quebec Liberals decimated.

The NDP wasn't even in the running in Quebec. Opposed to Quebec's protective language legislation and complicit with the Liberals in stripping Quebec of its constitutional veto, the NDP is seen as openly hostile to the national aspirations of the Quebecois.

As a minor labor-based party rooted

Barry Weisleder is a leader of the Socialist Workers Collective of Canada and is a member of the Ontario Public Service Employees Union.



in English Canada, the NDP simply cannot compete with the two main capitalist parties in Quebec on a "more federalist than thou" basis. Cut off from its natural constituency, the nationalist Quebec working class, the NDP is doomed to third-party status on a Pan-Canadian level.

The Sept. 4 election showed that a fundamental political realignment of forces across the Canadian state, in favor of the NDP and at the expense of the Liberals, is now more possible than ever. But it cannot occur without the NDP changing its approach to Quebec rights and at the same time linking up with a new political expression of the Quebec labor movement—an independent labor party.

For that reason, Gauche Socialiste, which stands for an independent and socialist Quebec, fights for the formation of a labor party based on the unions.

Likewise, in English Canada, the Socialist Workers Collective and other supporters of the Fourth International campaigned for the NDP under the slogan: "For an NDP-Quebec Labor Government."

For its part, the labor movement in English Canada conducted a low-profile effort on behalf of the NDP, confined mainly to telephone canvassing and lending union staff to local NDP riding campaigns. The labor leadership co-authored the NDP's treacherous Canadian nationalist/protectionist economic policy and fully endorsed the party's band-aid approach to solving the problems of capitalism in crisis.

The election was unexpectedly kind to the leadership of Ed Broadbent and the rest of the party top apparatus. Broadbent's personal reputation was enhanced, and there is no significant organized political challenge to the party's social-democratic program and

leadership from the ranks. But this situation is likely to change soon.

Both Mulroney and Turner campaigned for the leadership of their respective parties on a stridently anti-labor, cutbacks-oriented platform. "Reduce the deficit" was their common clarion call.

The huge parliamentary majority won by the Tories will incline them to implement this brutal platform, sooner than later, notwithstanding election campaign promises to the contrary.

Their commitment to strengthen the capitalist profit recovery at the expense of working people will leave the labor movement little political recourse other than extraparliamentary mass mobilization.

This, in itself, however, offers no guarantee of victory, as the defeats inflicted on labor and its allies in Quebec (winter 1983) and British Columbia (fall 1983) demonstrate.

### Confrontation looms ahead

But it is clear that a period of great confrontation looms ahead—a period that will impact greatly on the mass membership of the NDP, and the working class as a whole.

Broad unity in action is a burning necessity to stop the rulers' offensive—and labor must take the initiative to unite workers, women, community and consumers' groups, and the unemployed. Such a mass united front formed in British Columbia last year showed that it was possible to mobilize tens of thousands to confront the reactionary Social Credit provincial government. Unfortunately, the labor bureaucracy called off the struggle (which was heading for a decisive general strike), abandoned its allies, and accepted government promises that were soon reneged.

Now more than ever genuine solidarity coalitions that are autonomous, deeply-rooted and internally democratic, must be built to defend public service jobs, workers' rights, medicare, pensions, along with access to education and other vital social services.

How the coming battles are conducted will determine whether the organizations of working people in Quebec and English Canada will emerge from the 1980s qualitatively weakened or poised to struggle for power.

## Chile—11 years after coup: Mass protests defy Pinochet

By NANCY GRUBER

Two days of protest against the dictatorship of President Augusto Pinochet on Sept. 4-5 brought thousands of Chileans to Santiago's main square demanding an end to repression.

The demonstrations, called by a coalition of opposition groups, marked the 11th anniversary (on Sept. 11) of the coup in which the government of Salvador Allende was overturned and Allende himself murdered. The police violence against the protesters left 10 dead, dozens of injured, and over 500 arrests.

This demonstration, the tenth since May 1983, followed hard on the heels of protests of Aug. 10 in which tens of thousands of Chileans marched in Santiago, Valparaiso, and Concepcion for a return to democracy and the "right to life."

This basic right has been severely proscribed in the years of the Pinochet rule. An attempt to buy off the one million unemployed was made with the so-called "program of minimum employment" created in 1975. Those trapped in this program were placed in forced-labor camps where they received the equivalent of a kilogram of bread a day and were totally denied any kind of benefits.

The drastically reduced standard of living has been further aggravated by the huge debt amassed through the International Monetary Fund. That debt which stood at \$4 billion in 1973, has now climbed to \$20 billion and has

caused the government to impose severe austerity measures.

Civil liberties have virtually disappeared. In recent days two opposition magazines have been closed down, news censorship imposed on two independent radio stations, and four university campuses closed. Political police are authorized to detain for 20 days—and tor-

ture—anyone accused of "disturbing the peace."

In spite of such repressive measures, however, it is clear that the Chilean people are increasingly determined to resist and fight back. They are rebuilding their trade unions, their working-class coordinating bodies—such as the Comando Metropolitano de Trabajadores (CMT), and their political parties. Their objective is to put an end to the Pinochet dictatorship.

## British labor congress backs miners

By BRIAN HERON

The British National Union of Miners (NUM) has been on strike for over six months. The miners are fighting against the government's attempt to close "unprofitable" pits—at the expense of 20,000 jobs—and to smash the power of the NUM. The following report on the recent conference of the Trades Union Congress (roughly equivalent to our AFL-CIO) is taken from an article by Brian Heron in the Sept. 17, 1984, issue of *International Viewpoint*.

LONDON—The September Trades Union Congress (TUC) was completely dominated by the miners' strike. TUC leaders were forced to make a clear statement of support for the miners' union, which had the effect of isolating the right wing of the trade union bureaucracy on this issue. Their statement of "total support" overwhelmingly carried on the first day of the Congress, calls on unions to bar the carriage

of coal, coke, and other fuels across picket lines. But... the support is conditional on agreement with the unions concerned.

Labour Party leader Neil Kinnock spoke to the TUC on the second day. He tried to minimize the commitment of the TUC and the labor movement to the miners in his speech, and thereby reunite the right-wing trade union bureaucracy around himself.

Originally, the miners' union was set to lead the battle of the left wing at the TUC congress. But fighting amendments to their resolution on the strike were dropped to win a big majority of the union leaderships to support the TUC statement. A great deal now depends on whether the NUM can use the TUC statement to deepen the effects of their strike. In any case, it will be necessary to organize a left wing of the British labor movement around demands such as a national TUC Day of Action, whatever the results of the TUC's agreement. The right wing is still mobilizing to defeat the miners.

# Parti Quebecois defaults in nationalist struggle

The following interview with Francois Moreau, a leader of Gauche Socialiste [Socialist Left], a Quebecois organization that is in political solidarity with the Fourth International, was conducted in San Francisco on Aug. 20 by Alan Benjamin.

**Socialist Action:** Could you tell us about the general political situation in Quebec today?

**Francois Moreau:** I think the major feature is the decline of the Parti Quebecois (PQ), the nationalist party. From the early 1960s until 1981, it achieved constant growth because it succeeded in being the main political expression of the nationalist movement that arose during this period. The PQ made a number of small reforms after its election in 1976, and it promised to achieve the national liberation of Quebec. This was the main reason why it was able to win support.

Now it has been in power for eight years and Quebec is no closer to national liberation. To the contrary, the PQ government has suffered a number of defeats and setbacks that were worse than any previous government had suffered. The repatriation of the constitution was the first major setback of the Quebecois movement since World War II.

**S.A.:** What exactly is the repatriation of the constitution?

**Moreau:** The previous constitution of the Canadian state was enacted by the British Parliament in 1867. It was

impossible to amend it except by going through the British Parliament. Repatriation means that now the Federal government—the Federal Parliament—is going to be able to amend the constitution. But there is no protection at all for Quebec rights in this process. The new constitution has a whole section on language rights which was written deliberately to counter and invalidate Law 101 on Quebec language rights adopted by the PQ government in 1977.

## "We should look at the example of the Brazilian Workers Party."

As for the labor movement, the PQ used the confidence placed in it by the labor leadership to attack the working class in a savage way. For instance, teachers suffered a 20 percent wage cut-back as a result of new legislation by the government, and strikes were made illegal.

So in February 1984 there was a teachers' and hospital workers' strike to oppose this, but unfortunately the union leadership retreated in the face of a sharp confrontation with the government. At one point there were close to 200,000 people on strike—hospital workers, transit workers, and teachers.

I think that it would have been possible to broaden the support among other sectors of the working class, but this was opposed strongly by the union lead-

ership, which tried everything to roll back this fight and to bring about a compromise with the government. If the strike had continued for two weeks, the government would have been forced to resign.

**S.A.:** What has the labor officialdom proposed to fight the austerity plan?

**Moreau:** There is a polarization growing inside the labor movement between those who accept the so-called need for austerity and those who do

not. Basically the union bureaucrats accept the idea that workers should grant wage concessions, invest their money in the companies, and ask the government to give subsidies to the companies. Things that were opposed by the union movement 10 years ago, they now accept.

The union movement, by asking favors from the government, is acting like a kind of auxiliary force of the different capitalist sectors. This is called a "sectoralist strategy" by the Quebec Federation of Labor (FTQ). In each of the sectors they are going to do everything to help the companies.

There is also a solidarity fund scheme, which has been put forward by the leadership of the FTQ. The fund is made up of dues paid by the workers. It

is a kind of mutual fund which invests in shares of companies, supposedly in order to save jobs.

**S.A.:** What are the prospects for building a labor party in Quebec?

**Moreau:** Today the PQ has 25 percent support, according to the polls. They had 49 percent of the vote in 1981. Some of the 24 percent lost to the PQ have turned to the Liberal Party as a revenge. But many others are looking for a political alternative. So, at some point, a new political formation, in our opinion, will be built.

The question is whether it will be a new national populist bourgeois party or a labor party. Of course, we are working to develop a labor party which will be based on the union movement. But in order to achieve this we first have to fight in all the social movements to draw them away from lobbying one or another bourgeois party.

We are quite confident of the prospects for building a labor party because even in 1981 the possibility of local unions running candidates in the elections on their program was raised in a number of unions. It was agreed to in principle even in the big hospital union, but it was three weeks before the election and time was running short. We think that for the next election we are going to witness a number of these initiatives.

So from all these social movements—the labor movement plus other social movements that are fighting the government and employers—there will be increased political activity. Our task will be to try to help unify these forces, develop a program, and transform the growing motion into a firmly established party. I think we should look at the experience of the Brazilian Workers Party. I think this is the most encouraging precedent and example for working people in Quebec. ■

## ...South Africa revolt

(continued from page 1)

In fact, the only significant reform introduced by South Africa's new constitution was its provision to endow Prime Minister Botha with virtually dictatorial powers—even over the white chamber of the Parliament. Botha may now declare war, veto legislation, and dismiss Parliament under the powers granted by the constitution. Thus, the apartheid regime can introduce further "reforms" if it so desires, because effective power will continue to be wielded by the Prime Minister.

Under the impact of the Black protests of recent years, divisions have appeared among the white politicians over whether to introduce reforms. The dominant political party fears that the introduction of too many reforms would embolden the Black majority to press further toward the complete dismantling of apartheid.

### Revolt runs deep

In contrast to the situation in Israel, where the Palestinian population has been economically marginalized by colonial settlers, South African Blacks, who make up 73 percent of the total population, represent 85 percent of the industrial workforce. The vast bulk of the workers in the gold mines are Black, and mining is the key industry which provides half of South Africa's foreign exchange. The pressures of economic development have forced the regime to also permit Blacks to occupy various skilled job categories that were previously closed to them.

The struggle against the apartheid regime is spearheaded by two interlinked movements: the movement of urban shantytown dwellers and that of the Black independent unions. The school boycotts and the confrontations with the South African police around the anniversary of the death of Steve Biko, the founder of the Black Con-



sciousness movement, together with the latest strike by a union representing 70,000 Black mineworkers, demonstrate the depth of the recent revolt.

South Africa remains the most important ally of the U.S. government in the region, both because of its economic importance and because of its role as the main opponent of national liberation movements in Africa. However, despite its abundant wealth—South Africa has the greatest concentration of mineral resources of any capitalist country—it was not sheltered from the recent international recession. Inflation in South Africa has reached 15 percent and adds to the discontent of

Black workers.

The South African economy is intertwined with that of the imperialist countries. Half of all foreign investment south of the Sahara is centered in South Africa. South African corporations rely on joint-venture operations with Western European and U.S. firms to obtain necessary technological expertise. Foreign firms, moreover, control the great bulk of South Africa's electronics, auto, and oil industries. In fact, foreign investment in South Africa tripled from 1973 to 1981.

The fundamental prop of the South African regime remains the apartheid system itself. South African capitalism,

as it has developed, cannot exist without the exploitation of the Black masses. That exploitation rests on three features of the apartheid regime.

First, it is based on the forced separation of Blacks from landowning rights. That is, virtually the entire Black population is forced to look for work to survive. The Bantustans—the completely dependent Black states within South Africa—cannot produce enough food to feed their populations. For example, in Transkei, the largest of the Bantustans, only one-third of the minimum food requirements for the entire population can be produced within its territory. In contrast, 70,000 white farmers own 85 million hectares, or nearly 85 percent of all land in South Africa.

Second, apartheid is based on a system of virtually total racial segregation. Blacks have not achieved the right to be citizens of South Africa. A meshwork of repressive laws and regulations ensures a tightly controlled influx of Black workers into the industrial workplaces or cities. Union organizers or Black militants can simply be refused admittance to the white areas.

Third, it rests on the superexploitation of the Black working class. Black unions either have to become legally registered, which allows the apartheid regime to monitor them closely, or they are illegal, in which case they are subject to repression. By contrast, white workers in South Africa represent a privileged and conservative labor aristocracy, holding, for the most part, skilled and supervisory positions.

Black protests in South Africa—ranging from bus and school boycotts, to strikes, riots and demonstrations—will continue so long as the white minority regime is in power. The fight for Black majority rule will be inseparable from the fight for the social demands of the Black workers—a dynamic which will threaten the future of South African capitalism and open the door to the true liberation of all of Southern Africa from poverty and oppression. ■





Billboard hand-painted by Christian communities of Nicaragua to welcome the Pope.—“Welcome to Free Nicaragua; Thanks to God and the Revolution.”

## Pope “outlaws” class struggle

By CLIFF CONNER

Pope John Paul II's campaign against “liberation theology” has been stepped up lately. On Aug. 22 he issued a warning that he would not tolerate the use of class struggle as a basis for the Roman Catholic Church's “solidarity with the poor.”

Two weeks later, on Sept. 3, the Vatican released a sharp statement against “certain forms of liberation theology” that use “concepts borrowed from various currents of Marxist thought.”

Liberation theology developed in the 1960s in Latin America in reaction to poverty and brutal dictatorships. Certain priests and theologians saw that class struggle is an inescapable fact of life. They saw Marxism as the most accurate tool of analysis of class struggle. It could be used, they believed, together with the evangelization of the Catholic Church to produce social change. They thought that social change must be a primary concern of the church. In various forms liberation theology has spread to the Philippines, Africa, India, and parts of the United States.

The Vatican is most worried about

the example of priests who participated in the Nicaraguan revolution and who continue to serve in the Sandinista government. This has led to a sharp polarization of the Catholic Church in Nicaragua, wherein “rank-and-file” elements support the revolution while the hierarchy encourages the CIA-backed counterrevolution. Archbishop Obando y Bravo has ordered the pro-Sandinista priests to quit the government, but they have thus far not done so.

This is not an ivory-tower debate in the rest of Latin America either. In Brazil, for example, liberation theology is taught and practiced through some 70,000 Christian “base communities” claiming 4 million members. The Vatican is afraid they are teaching more Marxism than religion.

### “Neutrality is impossible”

The Sept. 3 statement acknowledges that the oppression and poverty of Latin America are “similar to what Marx described and interpreted,” but says that this does not justify Marxist solutions. “The class struggle,” it states, “as a road toward a classless society is a myth which slows reform and aggravates poverty and injustice.”

A sufficient answer was given by a leading liberation theologian, Dr. Gustavo Gutierrez of Peru, in his 1971 book, “A Theology of Liberation”: “Class struggle is a fact and neutrality in this matter is impossible.”

What does the Pope offer as an alternative to class struggle? “Reconciliation, without opposing groups, without being ‘against’ anyone.”

Most oppressed people, of course, would understand this as a formula for maintaining the status quo rather than a prescription for social change.

In 1979 the Pope told Latin American bishops that he objected to viewing Jesus “as a political activist, as a fighter against Roman domination and the authorities, and even as someone involved in the class struggle.”

In fact, that is a pretty good description of the historical Jesus who has been revealed by some modern researchers, including Isaac Asimov in his “Guide to the Bible.”

Ironically, the vanguard of the new biblical researchers has tended to come not from among “nonbeliever” academicians, but from Catholic theologians.

What they have shown is that the historical Jesus was the leader of a violent insurrection that had everything to do

with the class struggle. The coup d'etat failed, and he was executed by the Roman occupiers of Judea.

There is no evidence outside the New Testament that Jesus even existed. It seems likely, however, that the Gospel stories of his life were modeled on a real historical figure—one of the innumerable self-proclaimed “messiahs” of the times. Some elements of the biblical tale are obvious fabrications—the Bethlehem nativity, for example—but scholars have pointed to other reported episodes that have a degree of historical and logical consistency that lends plausibility to the existence of a historical Jesus.

A messiah, according to the common understanding of the times, was a warrior-king whose mission was to overthrow the existing rulers and establish the kingdom of god on earth. The many messianic movements of the time, these scholars explain, were motivated by Jewish nationalism and the class struggle. Jesus' attempted coup d'etat was no exception.

As Karl Kautsky pointed out in *Foundations of Christianity*, the Gospels reveal “a savage class hatred against the rich.”

Of the earliest Christian congregations, Kautsky writes: “Few are the occasions on which the class hatred of the modern proletariat has assumed such fanatical forms as that of the Christian proletariat.”

But as Christianity began to spread and gain respectability, and even began to recruit rich people, its leaders tended to water down the element of class hatred. The insurrectionist Jesus was more and more transformed into a pacifist. The New Testament reflects both of these diametrically opposed traditions.

Eventually, of course, Christianity became so respectable that it was officially adopted by the Roman Empire. It lost its fighting spirit and turned into an ideology and an institution upholding slaveholders and ruling classes. It is this later tradition that the pope and the Roman Catholic Church hierarchy represent today.

Whatever one may believe about the historical Jesus, the dispute over liberation theology reflects the struggle of the oppressed masses to be free and the attempts of the established state and church to repress that struggle. ■

## ... K.A.L. 007

(continued from page 1)

accounted for in subsequent position reports to air-traffic controllers.

The aircraft began to deviate from its scheduled flight path soon after takeoff, although it was not until it was out of the range of civilian air-traffic control that it veered widely off-course. The pilot, however, falsely reported to air-traffic control that the airliner was on course.

As K.A.L. 007 neared the Soviet Union, it passed in close proximity to a U.S. Air Force RC-135 reconnaissance plane, which is one of the most advanced spy planes in the skies. Despite U.S. denials, Pearson states that “it is certain that the RC-135 had identified the airliner and knew where it was and where it was heading prior to K.A.L. 007's first of two intrusions into Soviet territory.”

Pearson deduces that the time during which the two aircraft were in closest proximity was only *half an hour* before K.A.L. 007 first entered Soviet airspace. K.A.L. 007 was at that point more than 200 statute miles off its route.

“It is hardly believable,” Pearson observes, “that this extremely sophisticated reconnaissance aircraft operating close to the Soviet Union would let an unidentified (and possibly hostile) aircraft pass between its operations and its home base.”

Moreover, why did K.A.L. 007 alter its course precisely at the moment of its rendezvous with the RC-135?

The U.S. government claim that it was unaware of K.A.L. 007's fate is made even less credible by the fact that the Soviet Union was about to test a

new missile in this region. The “continuously vigilant U.S. and allied intelligence presence in the area” was thus “cranked up to the maximum” in preparation for the Soviet test. Far from an obscure speck in the sky, K.A.L. 007 was flying right onto “center stage” of the U.S. spy network's focus in the region.

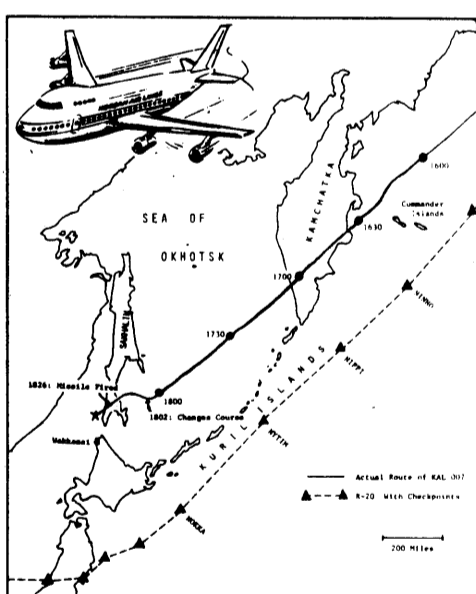
Pearson's study establishes as a “virtual certainty” that U.S. military and intelligence agencies, including the Air Force, the National Security Agency, the Central Intelligence Agency, the North American Aerospace Defense Command and the National Military Command Center at the Pentagon, “had to have known that Flight 007 was off-course well prior to the attack over Sakhalin.”

The agencies “had the time and means” to communicate with K.A.L. 007 but not one of them did. The White House and the Secretary of Defense, it can be presumed, knew of the events as they transpired.

Former intelligence officials told the *New York Times* that the U.S. military has over-the-horizon radar and radio navigational ability that can track aircraft almost anywhere in the world.

### A sophisticated spy system

Pearson details the sophisticated capacity of the U.S. intelligence system in the region. This monitoring system includes the Cobra Dane phased-array radar at Shemya Island in the Aleutians, which is powerful enough to spot a baseball at a range of 2000 miles out in space. Then there is the U.S.S. Observation Island, a ship equipped with a radar system, Cobra Judy, which can collect information that line-of-sight



SOURCE: David Pearson

constraints block from Cobra Dane.

Also watching that night were several U.S. stations in Japan, including the U.S. Air Force's 6920th Electronic Security Group, which is the largest signal intelligence station outside the continental United States, as well as several Japanese radar stations and U.S. bases in South Korea.

As one Pentagon officer said, “Nothing flies from, over, or near Sakhalin that we don't monitor.”

Pearson also notes that there is evidence that Soviet radar may have been jammed that night, implying that such electronic countermeasures were taken in an effort to protect the airliner.

The most “charitable interpretation,” Pearson admits, is that the pilot simply “blundered” into Soviet airspace and U.S. intelligence decided on the spot to take advantage of the opportunity, not believing that the Soviets would shoot

down the plane. But that explanation would imply that two experienced pilots incorrectly set the automatic pilot, which faces them at eye level, and failed to notice the error for five hours. They must also have decided not to use any of the radar or other systems available to them—hardly normal operating procedure.

The Reagan administration claims to this day that U.S. intelligence was unaware that K.A.L. 007 was dangerously off-course until it was too late. But if that is true then the conclusion must be drawn, as Pearson observes, that “the elaborate and complex system of intelligence, warnings and security that the U.S. has built up over decades suffered an unprecedented and mind-boggling breakdown.”

But there was no such “mind-boggling” breakdown. The fact that the vast electronic spy network remained strangely silent that night, sounding no warning to K.A.L. 007, more than suggests that the U.S. government was hardly a passive observer in the events that led to the downing of the aircraft.

David Pearson has persuasively documented his case that the United States was neither ignorant nor innocent in this affair. While much of the relevant data concerning the downing of K.A.L. 007 remains classified, Pearson's research demonstrates beyond any reasonable doubt that the culpability of the U.S. government in this tragic event can no longer simply be dismissed as a delusion of a few “conspiracy” theorists. ■

Copies of *The Nation's* Special Issue on K.A.L. 007 may be obtained for \$3.00 from *Nation Bulk Sales*, 72 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10011.

'The fight for workers' democracy is inseparable from the fight for socialism, and the condition for its victory. Workers' democracy is the only road to socialism, here in the United States and everywhere else, all the way from Moscow to Los Angeles and from here to Budapest.'

With these words, James P. Cannon, founder of the Trotskyist movement and of the Socialist Workers Party, concluded a speech to the SWP West Coast Vacation School on Sept. 1, 1957. In his speech Cannon sought to clarify the notions of socialism and democracy for U.S. workers. He sought to restore the fundamental importance of workers' democracy in the struggle for socialism; particularly after these two concepts had been so perverted under the crippling influence of Stalinism.

We are devoting this special Forum section to these fundamental concepts. Like Cannon, our purpose is to clear up the widespread confusion and misunderstanding about socialism and democracy. To this end, we are including a series of articles on the struggle for socialist democracy in Eastern Europe. We are also publishing excerpts from Cannon's 1957 speech.

With this Forum we seek to restore the full meaning of the famous statement by Marx and Engels in the Communist Manifesto that the "emancipation of the working class is the task of the workers themselves."

This task requires the active participation of the majority of the working class. What could be more democratic than that?—THE EDITORS

By ROLAND SHEPPARD

The June 17, 1984, statement of the Provisional Coordinating Committee of Solidarnosc in support of the striking British coal miners is a powerful testimony to what a democratic workers' movement is all about. Offered in opposition to the Polish government's strike-breaking act of selling coal to the British government, this statement also demonstrates the true nature of the Polish government.

Poland is a state where the major means of production have been nationalized but where a dictatorial bureaucratic caste oppresses the workers. These bureaucrats are of a similar breed to the current officialdom in the U.S. trade unions. They are both dominated by motives of self-interest and self-preservation at the expense of the workers and against the workers.

In this country, in response to the attacks of the employers, the union officials sell concessions to the employers and at the same time prevent their membership from opposing concessions. In return they hope to maintain their dues base and their control of the union. They beg the employers to be reasonable while they give away most of the gains of the past 40 years.

Internally they are ruthless toward any opponents of their policies and any rank-and-file organization which has the potential to challenge their rule. They are more interested in maintaining their salaries than in defending the standard of living of the members who pay the dues. They have also opposed solidarity with other unions and all workers in an exchange for peace with their individual employers. These policies have led to the demobilization of the membership and the increased vulnerability of the unions to being busted.

The bureaucrats in Poland also oppose the democratic organization of the workers. Instead of a democratic distribution of what is produced in Poland, the Polish bureaucracy takes what it needs at the expense of the pop-

## Polish Solidarity sets example for U.S. labor movement



Protestors in Poland defy martial law.

ulation as a whole. It defends its privileges with the use of arms.

To maintain its privileges in recent years the Polish bureaucrats have made concessions to the employers of the

world and have borrowed from them. By putting the country into debt they have allowed the international banks to profit from the labor of the Polish workers.

In order to maintain their credit rating with these bankers they are selling coal at below world market prices at the expense of the striking coal miners and the trade union movement in England. In the long run the debt problems of the Polish economy will also be exacerbated. They also promised to cut the standard of living of the Polish workers in order to secure these loans.

### Socialism, not Stalinism

This is all done in the name of socialism. Nothing could be further from the truth. Prior to the rise of Stalin, socialism used to be defined as the society of the majority and the extension of democracy into the field of production, as production for use instead of for profit, and the end of exploitation of man by man.

Solidarity came into being in opposition to these policies. It began as a union formation in opposition to the

austerity imposed by the capitalist loans. It developed quickly beyond a union formation, for in order to organize it had to oppose the lack of democracy in the country as a whole.

At each step in its development it has had to extend democracy, beginning in the workplace where it was first organized. The demand for workers' control over the production at the plant level organically led to the demand for workers' control of the economy in order to implement control at the workplace. Solidarity began to act as a political party, making demands for the reorganization of the state, but without a clear program or the realization that it was in fact a political party.

Although Solidarity suffered a defeat in December 1981, it is still a political force in Poland and will come back with more force and vigor because of lessons learned from past struggles. The statement on the British miners and the extension of workers' solidarity beyond the Polish borders clearly demonstrate its anti-capitalist and socialist direction. ■

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# Mexico rally marks birth of Solidarnosc

By LARRY COOPERMAN

The following speech was given by Larry Cooperman at a rally in Mexicali, Mexico, on Aug. 30 to commemorate the signing of the Gdansk accords in Poland. The rally was organized by the Mexicali Committee in Solidarity with Solidarity.

On behalf of Socialist Action, I would like to thank you for the invitation to speak at your event. The subject of Poland and Polish Solidarity remains very important to us in the United States. For us, Polish Solidarity has been and is a reminder of the "socialism we want."

It is the most powerful weapon that we have against the lies of the U.S. government and its allies that socialism equals tyranny, equals dictatorship, equals exploitation.

I have to mention that there have been various misconceptions about Solidarity that have been purposely spread by people who are challenged by the idea of a society run not just in the name of, but by the working class. Whether it was Brezhnev or Andropov, on the one hand, or Reagan on the other, they all said the same thing. They said that Solidarity was a pro-capitalist movement; that its aim was to restore capitalism in Poland. And so, Reagan claimed to support Solidarity and Brezhnev was opposed to it.

But Edward Lipinski saw it differently. Edward Lipinski is a 95-year-old socialist, who was a member of Poland's Communist Party even before World War II. After the war, he was one of Poland's most famous economists. In 1959, the Polish government decorated him with the "Order of the Banner of Labor."

In 1981, Edward Lipinski gave an important speech to the Solidarity Congress:

"The defense of socialism is a question of principles, a question of political views. . . . Socialism, as defined in the classic works of socialism, was to be a better, post-capitalist economy; freedom broader than in capitalism; the creation of conditions in which everyone would be given an opportunity to develop universally and have unlimited access to the products of culture and civilization.

"However, they created a socialism with a faulty economy, an incompetent economy, a wasteful economy, and it is this socialism that has led to an economic collapse unparalleled in the course of the last hundred or two hundred years. . . .

"This socialism of waste, this socialism of prisons, censorship and police, this socialism has been destroying us for 30 years, as it is doing with some other nations. . . .

"Yes, there are anti-socialist and anti-revolutionary forces. But, in my opinion, it is their socialism that is anti-socialist and anti-revolutionary."

## Purists oppose Solidarity

There are always those, who under the guise of Marxist purism, point to the ties of Solidarity to the Catholic Church for proof of its "reactionary" character. Yet, they forget that it was the top officials of the Catholic Church who counseled against any confrontation with the Polish regime, who condemned the "violence" of the strikers, who called for an end to the strikes.

This is not to deny that the Church also provided material support and refuge to the strikers, or that the Catholic

Church was the only institution independent of the government where the workers could speak freely. But what defines a movement is its objectives. And there is no movement anywhere in the world that fights for more freedom, for people's power, for a workers' self-managed economy that is reactionary.

Those purists who talk about the reactionary character of Solidarity and its ties to the Catholic Church should ask themselves how it is possible that—over 30 years after the Red Army chased the Nazis out of Poland, over 30 years after heavy industry was nationalized—how it is possible that 10 million workers could become anti-socialist or anti-revolutionary? Is the CIA so all-powerful that it could corrupt 10 million workers in Poland? Is the Polish workers' state so weak that it must rely on threats of Soviet intervention and massive arrests and police repression?

If the Solidarity movement was reactionary, why did it attract the majority of the working class base of the Polish United Workers Party (PUWP)? In 1979, 46 percent of the members of the ruling party were workers, and most of these worked in the large factories. By the time of the May 1981 congress, 11,000 proposals had been sent in by

**"For us Solidarnosc is a reminder of the socialism we want."**

rank-and-file members urging the democratization of the Party. After the defeat of the party reform movement, 500,000 workers resigned from the Party over the next six months.

No, the only thing that is threatened by Solidarity are the privileges of a small bureaucracy which controls the PUWP and the Polish state. It is the living standards of this group which have risen far above those of the working class even as they have mismanaged the economy. It is the working class which pays for their errors—their decision to tie the Polish economy to trade with the recession-ridden West. It is the Polish bureaucrats who amassed a foreign debt



Larry Cooperman, (center) a National Committee member of Socialist Action, addresses Aug. 30 rally in Mexicali, Mexico, commemorating the signing of the Gdansk Accords in Poland.

of \$30 billion to the imperialist banks. And it is the interest payments on that debt which keep Poland in serious economic straits.

That's why the *Wall Street Journal* noted that, if the Soviet Union were to invade Poland, at least the banks would be assured of full interest payments on the debt. That is why those of us in the United States who are socialist supporters of Solidarity demanded the cancellation of Poland's debt to the U.S. banks. We recognized that the U.S. government, while mounting a propaganda campaign about the evils of socialism, was more interested in having its banks paid off, since a default by Poland would threaten the financial stability of the world banking system.

The U.S. government supported the military coup in Turkey, which resulted not just in the banning of all trade unions, but in a repression far worse than that suffered by Solidarity in Poland.

## Solidarity supports British miners

The British miners' strike has settled once and for all this question of the supposedly progressive nature of the Polish government and the supposedly reactionary character of Solidarity. In Britain, there is a class line drawn between

the British miners and their supporters on the one hand, and the British government and its supporters on the other.

And it does not matter whether you call yourself a socialist as the Polish bureaucrats do. It does not matter whether you have read all the Marxist classics. The only thing that matters is whether you are fighting to defeat the government's attempt to destroy the miners' union. And it is the so-called socialists, the so-called communists, the so-called Marxist-Leninists of the Polish regime who are on the side of the British capitalists. It is they who have been shipping coal to the British government during the strike.

The only force in Poland which has condemned this anti-working class action is Polish Solidarity—not the church, not the government. Only Polish Solidarity draws the class line between the exploiters and the exploited, between rich and poor, between boss and worker.

The so-called purists, speaking in the language of Marxism, tell us that in the United States we cannot defend Solidarity. They say that, however noble the aspirations of Solidarity, we would inevitably fall into line with Reagan, the anti-communist defender of Solidarity. Our answer is simple: International solidarity has no borders which it is afraid to cross.

If we really want to defend the Central American revolution, we must counterpose our vision of socialism to Reagan's anti-communist campaign. If the workers of the United States, if the fighters against U.S. intervention in Central America allow Reagan to be the only voice claiming to support Solidarity, then his propaganda campaign will succeed. And the association many American workers make between socialism and tyranny will be reinforced.

It is the Stalinists of Poland, of the Soviet Union, and of other countries who have created this terrible misconception about socialism. And it is the imperialists who reinforce it in order to discredit socialism. Solidarity, the Workers Party in Brazil, the Central American revolutionaries, and thousands of others are part of an international battle, whether they are conscious of it or not, to create a vision of socialism entirely different from what exists in Poland.

The socialism we want is based on the democratic self-management of the working class. It has no need of armed forces that are used against its own working class. The socialism we want represents not more prisons, not more secret police, not the bureaucratic mismanagement of the economy, but rather the vast extension of human freedom. ■

## Solidarnosc supports striking British miners

At 10 am on June 17, 1984, the underground radio station Zwyciezmy (We Will Win) put out its third broadcast. This radio station is the voice of the Provisional Coordinating Committee of Solidarnosc miners in Upper Silesia, the country's main coal mining centre. Among other points, the 8 minute broadcast criticised the Jaruselski regime's coal marketing policy and declared its solidarity with the striking British miners. Here is the complete text of the relevant parts of the broadcast, first published in *Labour Focus on Eastern Europe*, (Vol. 7, No 2, Summer 1984, London).

"The underground Provisional Coordinating Committee of Solidarnosc miners vigorously protests against the present policy of the Polish People's Republic on the management of our major source of wealth, coal. Selling it on foreign markets at competitive prices (i.e. at less than world market prices) is first of all a violation of the Jastrzebie agreements (August 1980) in which it was clearly established that coal is a national resource which must be used rationally. The above-mentioned pricing policy transforms investment in the mines into a straight economic loss.

"Secondly, the Polish government's policy blatantly contradicts official propaganda that declares respect for the miners' dignity and endeavour. Thirdly, coal distribution and trade is organised outside of any social control. The Polish government has no right to behave like a mine owner and to dispose of the national wealth as it pleases. Only the damned capitalists and dictators act in this way. Fourthly, the Polish government's policy in this field affects the basic interests of brother miners from other countries who lose their jobs as a result of it.

"We hope the party authorities and parliament — who say they represent the people — explain what is really going on.

"To the striking miners of Great Britain: The underground Provisional Coordinating Committee of Solidarnosc miners sends you fraternal greetings and our support and solidarity for your struggle for the right to work. We know from our own experience what it means to lose a job. For this reason we will do everything possible to support your struggle, including in action. The protest we have sent to the Polish government and parliament is an initial measure taken in support of your struggle."

The technical material for Radio Zwyciezmy was donated to Upper Silesia Solidarnosc by West European Solidarity with Solidarnosc Committees, as a result of collections made among workers and in the trade unions. ■



# Peter Uhl, Czech fighter for workers' democracy, released from prison

The following is reprinted from the July 16, 1984, issue of *International Viewpoint*, a twice-monthly magazine published under the auspices of the Fourth International.

On May 28, 1984, Peter Uhl was released from prison, five years exactly after his arrest along with several other dissidents who had just set up the Committee to Defend the Unjustly Accused (VONS). At the VONS trial on Oct. 23, 1979, Uhl received the heaviest sentence—five years in a maximum security prison. On the eve of his release he was the only one, out of the five convicted in 1979, still in prison. The four others were Vaclav Havel, Jiri Dienstbier, Vaclav Benda, and Otta Bednarova.

It was Uhl's ninth year of imprisonment since the occupation of Czechoslovakia by the Warsaw Pact troops in August 1968. He paid dearly for his commitment to workers' self-management and democratic socialism, argued during the Prague spring of 1968.

In the mid-1960s, Uhl lived in France where he met the group of communist student activists around Alain Krivine, who were soon to form the Revolutionary Communist Youth (JCR). In their bitter opposition to capitalism as well as Stalinism, Uhl found an echo of his own preoccupations.

On returning to his own country he began to advance the struggle against the cancer of bureaucracy. This was not done in the name of a return to bourgeois "democracy" or to achieve greater delegation of bureaucratic powers in order to present a more "human face," as Dubcek proposed. It was done in the name of socialist self-management and democratic workers' power.

In the aftermath of August 1968 he was very active among students and took part in the organization of the students' general strike in Prague, when it was occupied by Soviet tanks. It was then that, along with other comrades,



French demonstrators in 1983 demanding Peter Uhl's release.

he helped to set up the Revolutionary Youth Movement (HRM).

### The HRM program

The program of this movement expresses clearly the anti-capitalist and anti-bureaucratic beliefs of its founders:

"We live in a system," they stated, "where capitalist relations of production and the capitalist mode of production have been abolished but where the construction of a democratic, socialist society has not even begun. Spurred on by the aim of opposing any abuse of communist ideals and by the belief that it is our duty and our right to fight effectively for these ideals against all those who ridicule and abuse them, we proclaim [the foundation] of the Revolutionary Youth Movement.

"We are convinced that the way forward for the Czechoslovak people and for the population of the USSR—and all the so-called

peoples' democracies—will be the destruction of the bureaucratic machine, the abolition of bureaucracy at all levels in society and the introduction of a system of self-management. This system of self-management would have to be expressed in all areas of life. In the workplaces, it would be reflected in the political and economic power of the workers' councils.

"A system of self-management will make it possible to exploit the creativity and initiative of each individual; it will create the conditions necessary for the scientific and technical revolution which will put an end to the problems of supply and distribution and the social inequalities that flow from them and will lead, ultimately, to the abolition of the state and its institutions on an international level."

(*Information Materially*, No. 1/71)

Peter Uhl has always remained faithful to the ideas expressed in this program. This is shown in the *Program for Workers' Management and Socialism*, which he compiled at the end of the 1970s (published jointly by Stock/La Breche under the title *Socialisme Emprienne*, Paris, 1980).

### Charter 77

Because of their activity in occupied Czechoslovakia, 18 activists of the HRM were arrested in December 1969. Their trial, supposedly against the

**"Within Charter 77 Uhl led the left-socialist current."**

"Trotskyist conspiracy" was the first under normalization. Uhl received the heaviest sentence—four years imprisonment.

On completion of this first spell of imprisonment, Uhl again took up dissident activity. He participated actively in discussions preparatory to the setting up of Charter 77 and in the elaboration of a tactic of open work to demand the implementation of laws in force in the Czechoslovak republic.

Within the Charter group Uhl was the leader of a left-socialist current. In the spring of 1979 he played a key role in the creation of VONS, defending the notion that the opposition should not content itself simply with exposing injustice and repression but must orga-



nize to defend its victims. This initiative earned him his second arrest and conviction, once again with the heaviest sentence, which he served to the end and under such harsh conditions that on many occasions people feared the worst.

The repression of which he was a victim stimulated the development of a huge international defense campaign. This included appeals, petitions, delegations of various personalities to the trial, demonstrations and the production in the winter of 1979 of a play—*Trial in Prague*—by the Soleil theatre in Paris. Amnesty International adopted Petr Uhl, including him in their list of the 15 most representative victims of political repression in the world.

### Campaign has impact

Even if this campaign did not produce an early release (as it did in the case of his co-defendant, Otta Bednarova, who became seriously ill and was released before serving her full term as the result of the intervention of various international personalities), it did at least mean that the conditions of his detention were improved and that the authorities did not attempt to prolong his sentence by a new trial as was feared at one time.

In fact, a year ago, Uhl was transferred to a more modern prison near Prague and once again had access to a library and to foreign books. The campaign was able to support his wife, Anna Sabatova, previously a political prisoner herself, and their two children throughout this painful ordeal.

The Czechoslovak bureaucracy is determined to break the will of the dissidents or force them into exile inside the country. Now more than ever, international solidarity is needed to enable the dissidents to operate inside the country.

We have seen very recently, in fact, that the Czech authorities have absolutely no intention of moderating their policy of repression. Ladislav Lis, the first prisoner to be conditionally released (he had to present himself everyday to the Prague police) has just been rearrested and sentenced to three months in prison for having left Prague for the weekend without notifying the police. Similarly, the young worker, Jiri Gruntorad, who served a four-year prison sentence has just been condemned to a further sentence of 18 months. ■

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At its August National Committee plenum, Socialist Action adopted a goal of obtaining 500 new subscriptions to our paper by November. In order to achieve this goal, we are offering a reduced-rate copy of "In Defense of Revolutionary Continuity"—Socialist Action pamphlet by

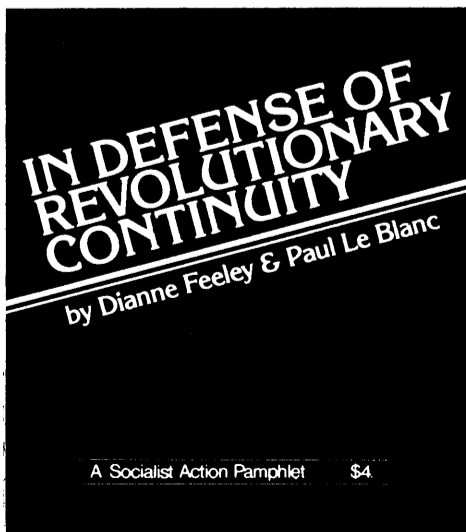
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For many years the Socialist Workers Party has been the foremost adherent in the United States of the revolutionary perspectives of Leon Trotsky. Recently, SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes has sharply challenged those perspectives, particularly the theory of permanent revolution.

This pamphlet is a response to that challenge. By surveying the history of the Marxist movement and examining present-day realities, the authors demonstrate the relevance of Trotsky's ideas in the "age of permanent revolution."



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# James P. Cannon speaks: "Socialism is the ever-expanding democracy of the workers"

By JAMES P. CANNON

The following are major excerpts from a speech given by Cannon at the SWP West Coast Vacation School on Sept. 1, 1957.

Comrades, I am glad to be here with you today, and to accept your invitation to speak on socialism and democracy . . . Strange as it may seem, an agreement on these two simple, elementary points, as experience has already demonstrated, will not be arrived at easily. The confusion and demoralization created by Stalinism, and the successful exploitation of this confusion by the ruling capitalists of this country, and all their agents and apologists, still hangs heavily over all sections of the workers' movement. . . .

The widespread misunderstanding and confusion about socialism and democracy has profound causes. . . . Socialism, in the old days that I can recall, was often called the society of the free and equal, and democracy was defined as the rule of the people. These simple definitions still ring true to me as they did when I first heard them many years ago.

But in later years we have heard different definitions which are far less attractive. These same people whom I have mentioned—leaders of the Communist Party and fellow-travelers, who have sworn off Stalin without really changing any of the Stalinist ideas they assimilated—still blandly describe the state of affairs in the Soviet Union, with all its most exaggerated social and economic inequality, ruled over by the barbarous dictatorship of a privileged minority, as a form of "socialism."

## Stalinism and big-business

Now, of course, the Stalinists and their apologists have not created all the confusion in this country about the meaning of socialism, at least not directly. At every step for 30 years the Stalinist work of befuddlement and demoralization, of debasing words into their opposite meanings, has been supported by reciprocal action of the same kind by the ruling capitalists and their apologists. They have never failed to take the Stalinists at their word, and to point to the Stalinist regime in the Soviet Union, with all of its horrors, and to say: "That is socialism. The American way of life is better."

It is these people who have given us, as their contribution to sowing confusion in the minds of people, the delightful definition of the capitalist sector of the globe, where the many toil in poverty for the benefit of the few, as "the free world."

And they describe the United States, where the workers have a right to vote every four years, if they don't move around too much, but have no say about the control of the shop and the factory; where all the means of mass information and communication are monopolized by a few—they describe all that as the ideal democracy for which the workers should gladly fight and die.

It is true that Stalinism has been the primary cause of the demoralization of a whole generation of American radical workers. There is no question of that. But the role of Stalinism in prejudicing

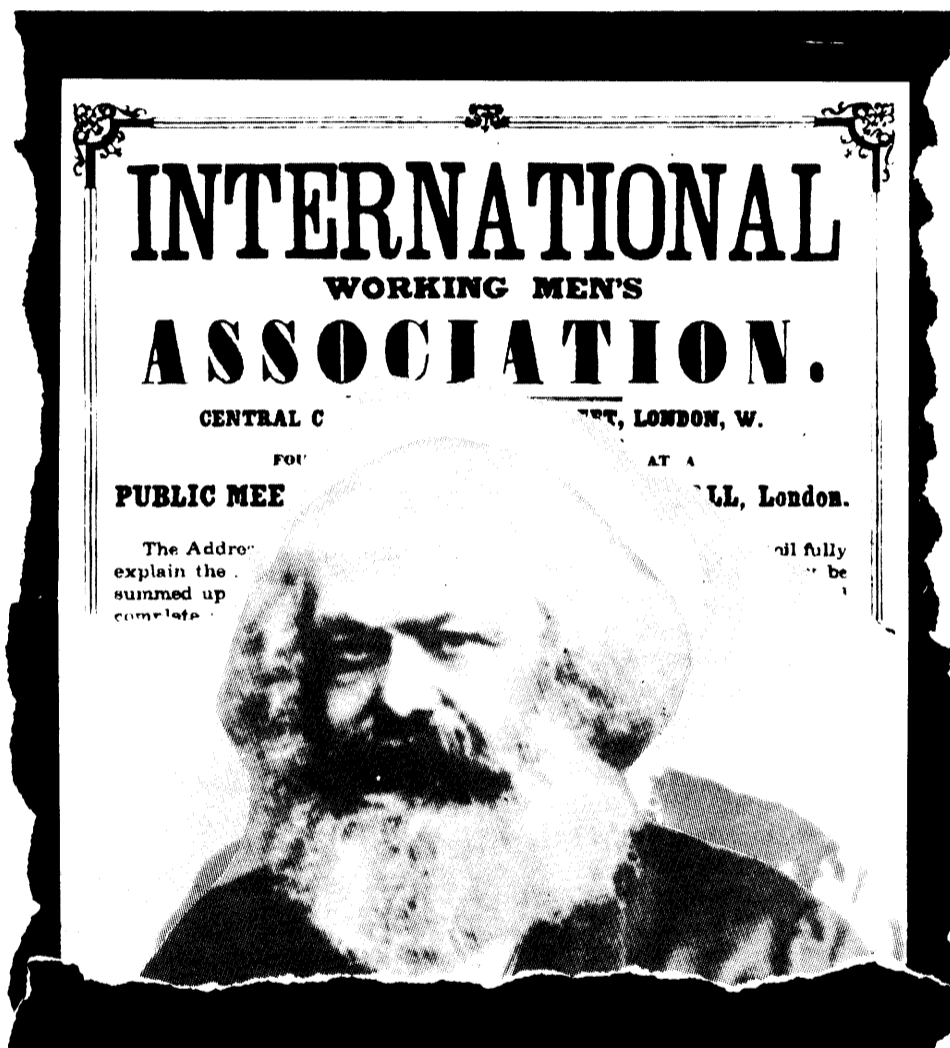
the great American working class against socialism, and inducing them to accept the counterfeit democracy of American capitalism as the lesser evil, has been mainly indirect. The active role in this miseducation and befuddlement has been played by the American ruling minority, through all their monopolized means of communication and information. . . .

We cannot build a strong socialist movement in this country until we overcome this confusion in the minds of the American workers about the real meaning of socialism. . . .

workers remain without voice or vote in the process, is just as foreign to the thoughts of Marx and Engels, and of all their true disciples, as the reformist idea that socialism can be handed down to the workers by degrees, by the capitalists who exploit them.

All such fantastic conceptions were answered in advance by the reiterated statement of Marx and Engels that "the emancipation of the working class is the task of the workers themselves."

That is the language of Marx and Engels—"the task of the workers themselves."



The authentic socialist movement, as it was conceived by its founders and as it has developed over the past century, has been the most democratic movement in all history. No formulation of this question can improve on the classic statement of the *Communist Manifesto*, with which modern scientific socialism was proclaimed to the world in 1848. The *Communist Manifesto* said:

"All previous historical movements were movements of minorities, in the interest of minorities. The proletarian movement is the self-conscious, independent movement of the immense majority, in the interest of the immense majority."

## The task of the workers themselves

The authors of the *Communist Manifesto* linked socialism and democracy together as end and means. The "self-conscious, independent movement of the immense majority, in the interests of the immense majority" cannot be anything else but democratic, if we understand by "democracy" the rule of the people, the majority.

The Stalinist claim that the task of reconstructing society on a socialist basis can be farmed out to a privileged and uncontrolled bureaucracy, while the

That was another way of saying—as they said explicitly many times—that the socialist reorganization of society requires a workers' revolution. Such a revolution is unthinkable without the active participation of the majority of the working class, which is itself the big majority of the population. Nothing could be more democratic than that.

## Workers must become ruling class

Moreover, the great teachers did not limit the democratic action of the working class to the overthrow of the bourgeois supremacy. They defined democracy as the form of governmental rule in the transition period between capitalism and socialism. It is explicitly stated in the *Communist Manifesto*—and I wonder how many people have forgotten this in recent years: "The first step," said the *Manifesto*, "in the revolution by the working class is to raise the proletariat to the position of ruling class, to establish democracy."

That is the way Marx and Engels formulated the first aim of the revolution—to make the workers the ruling class, to establish democracy, which, in their view, is the same thing. From this precise formulation it is clear that Marx and Engels did not consider the limited formal democracy under capitalism,

which screens the exploitation and the rule of the great majority by the few, as real democracy. In order to have real democracy, the workers must become the "ruling class."

Only the revolution which replaces the class rule of the capitalists by the class rule of the workers can really "establish democracy," not in fiction but in fact. So said Marx and Engels.

They never taught that the simple nationalization of the forces of production signified the establishment of socialism. That's not stated by Marx and Engels anywhere. The nationalization only lays the economic foundations for the transition to socialism.

Still less could they have sanctioned, even if they had been able to imagine, the monstrous idea that socialism could be realized without freedom and without equality; that nationalized production and planned economy, controlled by a ruthless police dictatorship, complete with prisons, torture chambers, and forced-labor camps, could be designated as a "socialist" society. That unspeakable perversion and contradiction of terms belongs to the Stalinists and their apologists.

All the great Marxists defined socialism as a classless society—with abundance, freedom, and equality for all: a society in which there would be no state, not even a democratic workers' state, to say nothing of a state in the monstrous form of a bureaucratic dictatorship of a privileged minority.

## Workers' democracy

The Soviet Union today is a transitional order of society in which the bureaucratic dictatorship of a privileged minority, far from serving as the agency to bridge the transition to socialism stands as an obstacle to harmonious development in that direction. In the view of Marx and Engels, and of Lenin and Trotsky who came after them, the transition from capitalism to the classless society of socialism could only be carried out by an ever-expanding democracy, involving the masses of the workers more and more in all phases of social life, by direct participation and control.

And, in the course of further progressive development in all fields, as Lenin expressed it, even this democracy, this workers' democracy, as a form of class rule, will outlive itself. Lenin said: "Democracy will gradually change and become a habit, and finally wither away," since democracy itself, properly understood, is a form of state, that is, an instrument of class rule, for which there will be no need and no place in the classless socialist society.

Forecasting the socialist future, the *Communist Manifesto* said: "In place of the old bourgeois society, with its classes and class antagonisms, we shall have an association."

Mark that, "an association," not a state—"an association in which the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all."

Trotsky said the same thing in other words when he spoke of socialism as "a pure and limpid system which is accommodated to the self-government of the toilers. . . and uninterrupted growth of universal equality—all-sided flowering of human personality. . . unselfish honest and human relations between human beings."

And I say we will not put the socialist movement of this country on the right track, and restore its rightful appeal to the best sentiments of the working class of this country, and above all to the young, until we begin to call socialism by its right name as the great teachers did. Until we make it clear that we stand for an ever-expanding workers' democracy, as the only road to socialism. Until we root out every vestige of Stalinist perversion and corruption of the meaning of socialism and democracy, and restate the thoughts and formulations of the authentic Marxist teachers. . . . ■



# James P. Cannon, 1890-1974: A fighter for socialism in America



By ASHER HARER

On the occasion of a 60th birthday celebration for James P. Cannon and Rose Karsner (Jim's companion and political collaborator), Cannon asked himself a key question that many an aging revolutionary fighter has asked: What have I accomplished? Answering himself, Jim said:

"There I can tell you that I have perhaps made a more objective judgment than you have. I am one man who took seriously the injunction of the Greek philosophers: man, know thyself. And if I don't know myself, I've come as close to it as a man can. Because I know myself, I don't claim great accomplishments. I am well aware of all the negligences and faults. I can't, in good conscience, stand up and say that I did the best I knew; I only did the best I could. That's quite a difference. . . I am human and therefore fallible and prone to error and even folly, like all others. . . I did the best I could."

(*Speeches for Socialism*, Pathfinder Press, p. 257)

In an article, "Trotsky on America," Cannon wrote: "In the hundred years of the modern movement of workers' emancipation we know only four genuinely creative minds. These are the masters of scientific socialism, Marx and Engels, and their great disciples, Lenin and Trotsky."

As we can see, Cannon was a modest and very honest man. He claimed no originality in the field of socialist theory. He called himself an agitator and a teacher. But he was much more than that. "I did the best I could," he said. But, as I hope to show in this brief sketch, that "best" was more than enough to assure for James P. Cannon a special place in American socialist and labor history, and also in the history of the Fourth International, the world party of socialist revolution founded by Leon Trotsky in 1938.

## A working-class leader

Cannon was an organizer for the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) from 1911 to 1918 and was active in the left wing of the American Socialist Party of Eugene V. Debs. He was one of the young leaders who founded the American Communist Party in 1919. He was elected to its political committee and served on the presidium of the Communist International in Moscow from 1922 to 1925.

In the IWW he served his apprenticeship under the great "Wobbly" leaders, "Big Bill" Haywood and Vincent St. John. In the Communist International he worked with Lenin, Trotsky, and other leaders of the Russian Revolution.

In the great class struggles that took place during and after World War I, the only revolution that succeeded was the Russian, led by Lenin and Trotsky. As the smoke cleared, backward Russia stood alone, isolated, devastated by war and civil war. The pressure on its leadership was tremendous.

Gradually, a self-serving bureaucracy, led by Joseph Stalin, developed. It lost confidence in the ability of the world working class to extend the revo-

lution. It sought instead accommodations with world imperialism: "We'll lay off world revolution if you lay off us."

In time, this strategy led to the Stalin-Hitler Pact of 1939, which marked the opening of World War II.

Lenin and Trotsky saw what was happening and formed a bloc against Stalin. But Lenin died in 1924. Trotsky's Left Opposition was defeated. In 1928 Trotsky was exiled, hounded from one country to another, and in 1940 assassinated by a Stalinist agent in Mexico.

In 1928 Cannon was a delegate to the Sixth Congress of the Communist International in Moscow. Almost by accident, he and a Canadian delegate, Maurice Spector, came into possession of exiled Trotsky's "Draft Program of the Communist International—A Criticism of Fundamentals."

They decided that Trotsky was right—but didn't dare say so at the time.

Back in America they spoke out and were promptly expelled. They proceeded to set up political organizations to support Trotsky.

## Trotsky and Cannon

In 1933 Hitler came to power in Germany, without the million-membered CP putting up a serious struggle against him.

Now it was clear that the Communist International (also known as the Third International) was unreformable—that it had become basically counter-revolutionary under Stalin. Trotsky called for the formation of a new international to combat and replace the Stalinist international. Five years were to pass before this took place.

In 1938, Trotsky, now in Mexico, began a collaborative relationship with the American Trotskyists, led by Cannon. He "adopted the American party [the Socialist Workers Party] as his own," Cannon often remarked. Trotsky, like Cannon, considered the founding of the SWP to be one of the great achievements of the American working class and of the Fourth International.

When Trotsky wrote the program for the new international, "The Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the Fourth International," he asked the SWP to adopt it and present it to the founding conference of the Fourth International in Europe in the fall of 1938.

In addition, he asked that Cannon be sent to Europe to help organize the conference. Cannon did so—under Trotsky's direction.

While Cannon was in Europe, Trotsky wrote to

**"I did the best I could," he said. But that 'best' was more than enough to assure a special place in history.**

Rose Karsner: "Dear Comrade Rose, It seems Jim is doing an excellent job in Europe. I regret very much that we don't have a couple of Jims more. At least one for Europe. . ." (*Writings of Leon Trotsky 1937-38*, Pathfinder Press, p. 448).

Cannon said that "Trotsky thought more highly of me and valued me far more highly than I value myself. . ."

The truth is that Trotsky considered Cannon to be a master organizer, a party-builder, and also an internationalist who always took a world view of problems.

And Cannon saw internationalism as Lenin and Trotsky did: international collaboration and mutual support with interchange of ideas and criticism, but with each national section independent in decision-making; tied together by a common adherence to Marxist program and strategic world outlook.

As Joseph Hansen said, Cannon felt that "it was a revolutionist's first duty to master the affairs of one's own country. Over the years he had seen too many instances of individuals, especially those with intellectual pretensions, who shirk their first duty, covering up their dereliction by becoming pseudo-experts on the affairs of other countries."

("James P. Cannon, Internationalist," *Socialist Workers Party Educational Bulletin*)

Cannon made it his life's work to build a centralized, disciplined working-class party, fully democratic in decision-making—but with one face to its enemies and opponents. His goal was a mass Leninist party that could take on the American capitalist class and establish a socialist America. His "American Theses" (1946) laid out the basic strategic line to accomplish this goal.

Trotsky called America "the foundry in which the

fate of man is to be forged."

He stated that "in the last historic analysis all the problems of our planet will be decided on American soil."

Cannon agreed. He said, "What other countries need from us, above all else, is one small but good revolution in the United States."

He recognized the destructive power of the American imperialist colossus astride the world, armed with the most technology and nuclear weapons. He insisted that no revolution anywhere in the world—from Latin America, to Cuba, to Russia itself—was safe until American capitalism was toppled.

## The SWP's new course

It is a tragedy that the present leadership of the SWP, the party founded by Cannon and to which he dedicated most of his life, has begun to turn its back on the revolutionary traditions that Cannon stood for. The SWP's sectarian and abstentionist attitude toward the trade unions and the antiwar movement, for example, stands in stark contrast to the practice of the SWP under Cannon. (See *Socialist Action Information Bulletins*.) In the process, many proven concepts of Lenin and Trotsky on the strategy of world revolution and the methods of party building are being jettisoned. In fact, Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution has now come under attack from the current SWP leaders.

Those of us in the SWP who sounded a warning to reverse this trend were framed up and expelled, just as Cannon was expelled from the Communist Party in 1928. Socialist Action, a public faction of the SWP, was founded by expelled members of the SWP in order to defend the party against the destructive course of its present leadership. Socialist Action was formed to defend the basic ideas of Trotskyism and the Fourth International. In that sense, James P. Cannon, chief architect of the strategy of the American revolution, stands in our ranks.

## A life dedicated to socialism

Unlike Lenin, Cannon never lived to see his revolution. As the struggle went on, he knew that this would be the case. That didn't bother him. In a speech at his 60th birthday, he said:

"I decided to be a socialist and to live as a socialist insofar as physical restrictions would permit, even within capitalist society. And having that philosophy, I have felt that every little thing I contributed from day to day to the struggle for the socialist goal of the future was a vindication of my own life that day, and that every day was a victory. If one has that conception of socialism, and lives by it, he does not need to wait for the final victory of socialism. He has his own share of socialism as he goes along. . . And here with you tonight, in the midst of friends and comrades, I feel like a privileged citizen of that good society of the free and equal, of that future which Jack London so beautifully described as 'the golden future, when there will be no servants, naught but the service of love.'" (*Speeches for Socialism*, p. 261)

Several times, in conversations with Jim, I raised the question of his autobiography—when was he going to write it? He would answer each time, "I'm thinking about it—but you know, that's a big job. But I'm thinking about it."

But he never did.

Jim's political history, of course, is in his books, starting with *The Struggle for a Proletarian Party* (1943). But strictly speaking, there is no autobiography or biography, at least not all in one place.

Jim was a very private person. But in personal conversations and letters to friends, he did talk about his personal life. In two books, *Letters from Prison* (written while he and other leaders of the SWP were in prison for opposing World War II) and in *James P. Cannon As We Knew Him*, you will discover the complexity and humanity of this remarkable man, his knowledge of great literature, especially poetry, and the deep love he had for those closest to him.

In these books—and I should add *Notebook of an Agitator*—you will also encounter the angry James P. Cannon, possessed by what he called "that holy emotion of rebels and revolutionists, about injustice, oppression, lies and hypocrisy."

Jim was not a dispassionate observer of the human condition; he was a participant in the struggle to change the world.

James P. Cannon was the original American Trotskyist; the best representative, so far, of the type of American revolutionary that will bring socialism to America. ■

Asher Harer was a founding member of the SWP. He served on the national committee of the SWP for 20 years and was a long-time collaborator of James P. Cannon.

# Labor under siege; secret talks, selective strikes demobilize workers

Workers in the United States have been under siege since the monetary crisis that broke out at the end of the 1960s signaled an end to the post-World War II worldwide capitalist economic expansion.

Hard-won economic gains continue to be wrenched away. The official "leadership" of the unions continues its headlong retreat, agreeing to major giveback concessions in the vain hope that these will dull the appetites of profit-hungry corporations. Bosses and bureaucrats agree on the necessity to restore the profitability of U.S. business. The bosses, however, are a long way from satisfied and demand more.

The union misleaders see themselves as "partners" of capital. Refusing to mobilize the membership for a fight, they seek to out-manuever the bosses through "clever" negotiations designed to gain the maximum possible for union members *within the framework of maintaining the profitability of capitalist enterprise.*

This is a bluff designed to fool the ranks of the unions into believing that sacrifices *must* be made and that the unions are too weak to dare mount a decisive fightback.

This strategy, based in the last analysis on the illusory notion of a community of interests between labor and capital, is why rank-and-file union members are uninformed, uninvolved, and unprepared to respond to the relentless employer attacks.

## Restructuration not new

The series of setbacks suffered during the nearly 15-year-long employer offensive has caused some in the workers' movement to ask some basic questions:

Does this 15-year retreat indicate that American workers have lost their will to fight? Does this reflect a decline in the potential power of industrial workers to bring the economy to a standstill? Do transfers of major U.S. production facilities to other countries qualitatively reduce the potential power of industrial workers?

Our answer to these questions is a flat—No!

Some in the workers' movement are dismayed by the proliferation of plant shutdowns and the export of U.S. capital investment into productive facilities abroad, both of which have led to increased levels of permanent unemployment. But they have mistakenly ascribed these structural changes to some sort of clever scheme by the capitalist class to undermine the power of the American working class.

These structural changes in the economy are not new. They are merely expressions of the logical tendency of capitalism to produce more goods with fewer workers and to systematically seek new fields of profitable investment anywhere across the globe.

The internationalization of capital and the export of U.S. industry abroad have not given the U.S. economy a new lease on life. On the contrary, as Karl Marx predicted over a century ago, these changes are evidence of the inherent contradictions of capitalism, which are creating the conditions for this economic system's downfall.



Socialist Action/Asher Harer

Striking San Francisco restaurant workers. Walk-outs began in August in over 15 city restaurants.

It is, in fact, the threat of collapse of the world capitalist economic house of cards that compels the current onslaught against the living standards of U.S. workers. Wages must be reduced to keep profit rates high enough to maintain a rate of reinvestment sufficient to keep the economy going.

This is the Achilles' heel of capitalism. There is no other way to raise profit rates except by extracting more profits out of the workers' hides. But the reduction in the workers' share of the fruit of their labor has a long way to go before the capitalist profit rate is stabilized. An explosive fightback is inevitable when the cuts become unbearable and it becomes clear that it is not an episodic but a permanent reduction.

## Bureaucrats demobilize workers

American workers, like workers everywhere, continue to show their will and capacity to wage an effective struggle for their interests when given half a chance. The most dramatic instance of this was the victorious 1977-78 miners' strike in defiance of a threat by President Carter to use federal troops to force the miners back to work. More recently, the UAW workers at the AP Parts plant in Toledo, the striking Phelps Dodge copper miners in southern Arizona, and the ATU Greyhound bus drivers have demonstrated their readiness to mobilize to defend themselves and their unions.

There are, however, two basic reasons why a massive fightback has not yet erupted—although there have been skirmishes that are a sign of bigger battles certain to come:

First: The highly privileged union bureaucrats—softened by salaries double, triple, and even quadruple the incomes of the membership who pay the dues—*refuse* to mobilize workers for a fight.

UAW President Owen F. Bieber has just maneuvered his membership into accepting a three-year giveback contract. While the terms of this contract have been kept hidden from the auto union membership, the ruling class is kept intimately informed. An "independent analyst" quoted in the Sept. 22 *New York Times* judges the contract to be a victory for the bosses: "I feel very positive that this is a good settlement for the company."

The UAW officialdom's policy of secret negotiations were accompanied by grossly ineffective "selective strike" tactics, which *reduce* the economic pressure on the company and contribute to the feeling of powerlessness widely prevalent in the union ranks. Through such a combination of secret negotiations and demoralizing strike tactics, the auto workers and the working class as a whole have been delivered yet another setback; the worst kind of all—one without a real fight.

## Fighting capacity intact

Second: A massive fightback has not yet exploded because the gains won in the class battles of the 1930s and 1940s remain essentially intact. The fighting capacity of the unions has not been broken, nor have the economic gains made during this period been reversed—despite the retreats imposed on the unions with the help of the bureaucratic misleadership.

The masterminds calling the shots for the ruling class are also aware of labor's dangerous—if dormant—potential. The capitalist assault on the unions proceeds with extreme caution. The bosses retreat when indications appear that new takebacks might trigger a dynamic that could lead to the kind of setback they received from the coal miners in 1978.

The problem of working-class leadership remains the key to a successful fightback and ultimate victory. A new leadership in the unions must recognize the reality of the ongoing struggle between classes. It must chart a class-struggle program based on the need for working-class solidarity, union democracy, and independent political action.

The labor bureaucracy is the principal obstacle within the unions to mounting a successful fightback. But the Owen Beibers and their ilk must and will be shoved aside. The coming struggle for an effective labor strategy will begin with the fight for democracy in the union movement and will end with the institution of a generalized system of workers' democracy in every work place and sphere of activity—from the local communities all the way up to a government based on working people and their natural allies.

# UPS Teamster ranks still fighting

By HAL LUNDFORD

NEW YORK CITY—Teamsters for a Democratic Union, a national rank-and-file organization, won a victory last month when a federal court judge ordered a new vote on the contract recently negotiated with United Parcel Service. The TDU charged that Teamster president Jackie Presser had collaborated with UPS to deny union members their right to have input into the contract. The TDU suit revealed that Presser had met secretly with company officials and had accepted their offer to extend, with some modifications, the 1982 concessionary contract covering 90,000 employees.

The 1982 contract has meant a two-and-a-half-year wage freeze—while company profits climbed from \$327.8

million in 1981 to a record \$489.8 million in 1983. Although the negotiated extension offers a \$1000 "bonus" (\$500 for part-timers), the cost-of-living payments will continue to be diverted into paying for health, welfare, and pension benefits. The two-tier wage structure, which was begun in 1982, is extended to a three-tier structure in the new contract, further weakening the union by dividing the ranks and giving UPS an incentive to fire senior employees. There are no improvements in benefits, nor measures to curb UPS's contract violations and productivity drive.

In an attempt to railroad the contract through, Presser began mailing out ballots for an immediate ratification vote only hours after he informed the surprised local officers that negotiations were over. He sought to preempt any battle against extension of concessions. A Teamster official explained that "Both sides were deathly afraid that otherwise we'd have 90,000 on strike for no telling how long."



Teamster President Jackie Presser

In other words, the bureaucracy's priority is on labor peace and keeping the membership demobilized at any price.

Presser was trying to avoid another discrediting defeat like last year's 88 percent vote rejecting his proposed relief-ride to the master freight contract. At that time TDU had provided the information and organization to

rally the membership. Over the past few years, TDU has developed significant support at United Parcel, so that Presser and the UPS management could expect strong opposition to a poor contract if the membership was given a chance to discuss it.

As it was, hastily called local Teamster meetings in 18 cities called for a "no" vote. The largest local, in New York City, had threatened to pull out of national negotiations in protest. Despite this militancy, the absence of democratic discussion and the fact that only a one-third minority vote is needed to ratify Teamster contracts would have probably allowed the sell-out proposal to go through if the TDU had not won in court.

Teamsters from UPS, freight, carhaul, and other jurisdictions facing the current round of negotiations will be meeting in Chicago on Oct. 13-14 at TDU's Rank-and-File Convention. Participants will attempt to draw the lessons of the "sneak attack" by UPS and Jackie Presser to impose concessions and they will prepare to mobilize the membership to fight for union democracy, better contracts, and a stronger union.



# Greenmail & golden parachutes

By HAYDEN PERRY

The skyscraper towers of corporate America loom over town and city much as the medieval cathedral spires soared above the humble homes of burghers and peasants.

No doubt many corporate managers savor this comparison as they are whisked by limousine and high-speed elevator to their executive suites high above the milling throngs. Are they not the 20th century priesthood ordained by capitalism to preside over the system that creates the necessities and luxuries that keep the people happy? Are they not dedicated to their corporations' welfare 12 or 18 hours a day?

Before our corporate manager wraps a cloak of sanctity about himself we should take a closer look at life in the executive suite. This is not easy to do. A guard at the door will make it plain you are not welcome there. You will even have trouble learning who the executives are.

At one time you could identify a major company with a single person. When Henry Ford said you could have your Model T in any color so long as it was black, you knew exactly where to register your protest.

Today you try to get satisfaction over a defective General Motors car and you find, with few exceptions, that a curtain of anonymity has fallen on every official who has any responsibility in the corporation.

An unkind critic might claim that these faceless people must have something to hide. Judging by reports in the daily press, the unkind critics are right. These high priests of corporate power are not the dedicated stewards of stockholders' and consumers' interests they claim to be. Their overriding concern seems to be their own personal well-being and enrichment.

Recently a group of top-level executives of the auto industry were considering the allocation of \$50 million of their companies' resources. Were they thinking of investing in a safer seat belt or a more fuel efficient engine? Not at all. They were deciding how to divvy up \$50 million in bonuses among themselves.

They had forgone bonuses for the past few years because of plunging sales. Workers down on the shop floor had given up \$4 billion in wages and benefits in the same period, but there

was no plan to share any bonus with them.

After all it was top management that had pulled the industry out of its slump through a brilliant strategy. They had persuaded the administration to pressure the Japanese to restrict the export of their popular and efficient cars. Then all the auto moguls had to do was to sit on their hands and wait for desperate motorists to shell out big bucks for overpriced American cars they did not want but were forced to buy.

## Just like Marie Antoinette

For helping devise this brilliant strategy Phillip Caldwell, chairman of Ford Motor Co., received a bonus of \$7 million. When a tactless reporter asked Mrs. Caldwell whether she thought her husband deserved a bonus of that size she replied, "How can I answer that without sounding like Marie Antoinette?"

Bonuses like these tarnish the image of corporate managers as dedicated guardians of our national resources. It also makes them vulnerable to takeover bids.

An example of a takeover bid was seen at Walt Disney Productions last Spring. Saul Steinberg, head of Group Holdings Inc., wanted to try his hand at movie-making and running amusement parks, or so it seemed. With millions in hand and more millions borrowed, Steinberg bought up all the Disney stock he could find. As the price of the stock rose many holders were willing to sell and take a profit. Others loyally held onto their stock because they thought Steinberg knew zilch about movie-making and would only run a good company into the ground.

Disney management saw things differently. If Steinberg got voting control their jobs would be in jeopardy. This had to be prevented at all costs, especially any cost to be paid by Disney Productions. First they diluted everyone's stock by issuing \$525 million in new shares to buy a greeting card company that served no corporate purpose, except that Steinberg would have to buy more stock to get control.

When this maneuver failed to stop Steinberg they decided to meet the problem head on. They would borrow the money and pay Steinberg any price he wanted for the stock he held. The price Steinberg wanted was \$70.83 a share for

a total of \$325.5 million, which gave Steinberg a profit of \$31 million for a few weeks work, mainly on the telephone.

The loyal shareholders who held onto their stock were not invited to participate in this bonanza. In fact after the dust had settled on this high-level operation the little stockholders found the value of their shares had fallen from \$65 to \$50, and it is likely to plunge further.

What about Mr. Steinberg's desire to make movies and run amusement parks? It seemed his only desire was to make money. Some would say his operation was blackmail. But blackmail is a crime, so they call it greenmail—all perfectly legal. The con men take their

In the jet age the executive does not desert the sinking ship, but bails out of the plunging airplane. For this he needs a parachute, preferably a golden parachute that will land him on easy street with stacks of greenbacks to cushion his fall.

Last spring Roger E. Anderson was an executive officer in the high-flying Continental Illinois Bank that went belly-up at a cost to the taxpayers of \$7 billion.

Anderson saw rough-flying weather ahead and prudently arranged for his golden parachute. As a "reward" for years of gross mismanagement of the bank Mr. Anderson has retired on a lifetime pension of six figures, plus a cash severance payment of \$280,000. As frosting on the cake his club dues have been paid up for a year.

Multimillion dollar bonuses, green-



profit and the executives hold on to their lucrative jobs. The losers are the stockholders who have been fleeced by the high priests dedicated to serving them.

Sometimes management can find no way of saving its jobs. The company is on the skids and about to founder. The executives' ethic does not include going down bravely with the sinking ship. Rather it means save yourself and let the rest go under.

mail, and golden parachutes indicate that many executives have lost faith in the stability of the corporate structure. They believe they must get in, get rich, and get out.

Workers are also losing faith in the corporate structure. Since they have no golden parachutes, they must organize to kick the parasites out of their executive suites and make the corporate towers belong to all the people. ■

## On the picket line

### UAW calls off selective strikes

A tentative settlement was reached Sept. 21 between the United Automobile Workers (UAW) and General Motors, ending a week-long selective strike. The strike had affected one-third of GM's workforce and had stopped half of GM's total production.

The pact has been hailed by economists and industry sources as being beneficial to the automobile industry and to the U.S. economy. It calls for annual 2.25 percent wage increases, which is less than the average 2.7 percent increase in other major contract agreements. Furthermore, it gives GM virtually free rein in reorganizing its workforce to eliminate jobs. GM has already announced plans to eliminate 60,000 to 120,000 jobs in the next two years.

In return for work-rule concessions, the UAW won a commitment from GM to establish a \$1-billion fund to provide retraining for workers laid off as a result of technological improvements and "outsourcing" from foreign and nonunion companies.

The \$1-billion fund is to be built up

by annual payments of \$167 million over six years. The total cost of the entire agreement is expected to add 20 percent to GM's costs over the life of the contract. By contrast, the 1979 UAW-GM contract added nearly 40 percent to GM's labor costs.

GEORGE CRANSTON

### UMW signs pact with coal bosses

FAIRMONT, W.Va.—The United Mine Workers (UMW) signed a contract with the Bituminous Coal Operators Association (BCOA) on Sept. 21. that provides for a 10.25 percent (\$1.40 an hour) pay increase over the life of the new 40-month contract.

The contract includes increases in pensions and benefits, including a new 50-percent pension for spouses of miners who die before retirement.

The contract tightens up loopholes that allowed companies to circumvent the contract by leasing mines and subcontracting out some mine work. The contract requires operators who sublease mines from union companies to give first-hiring rights to union members

laid off at the mine by the parent company.

The agreement covers about 75 percent of the union's 160,000 members. About 12,000 miners are not covered by the BCOA agreement. UMW President Rich Trumka said selective strikes against the Island Creek Coal Co., the National Mines Corp., the A.T. Massey Coal Co., and the North American Coal Corp. will begin Oct. 1. The union has amassed its first strike fund, estimated at \$45 million, which will be put to use to force the remaining operators to abide by the BCOA master contract.

The union leadership had proposed for the first time in 20 years that the union depart from the "No Contract-No Coal" position that has governed negotiations in the past.

Trumka had maintained complete secrecy as to the union's strategy, supposedly to avoid unfavorable press coverage. But it is likely that layoffs will occur in the near future as companies have been stockpiling coal and pushing overtime in preparation for a strike.

KATE CURRY

### Workers strike at Kroger chain

CLEVELAND—Last year, Kroger Co., a grocery chain, threatened to close all of its northeastern Ohio stores unless members of the United Food and

Commercial Workers (UFCW) agreed to concessions. Through these blackmail tactics, the company succeeded in extorting a 70 cents-per-hour wage cut and stealing three paid holidays.

This year the company has demanded that workers accept a \$2-per-hour wage cut and benefits reductions. The bosses claimed failure to approve the new concessions would result in store closings.

On July 29, the clerks' division of UFCW Local 880 voted to accept a one-year contract including these concessions. The meat cutters' division, however, refused. The union has withstood company pressure to force a new vote by the meat cutters.

When the contract expired, Kroger unilaterally imposed the rejected settlement on the meat cutters. At midnight on Sept. 10, the 250 meat cutters at 15 Kroger stores in northeastern Ohio set up picket lines. This is the first Cleveland grocery strike since 1952.

Kroger has gone all out to break the strike. On Sept. 12, the company began hiring scabs. Although the company has successfully intimidated most clerks into crossing the meat cutters' lines, the new wages and working conditions have caused some clerks to demand a revote.

Most delivery drivers are honoring the UFCW picket lines. Pickets report great success in persuading customers to shop at other grocery stores.

SHIRLEY PASHOLK

# Communist Party record in Harlem reassessed

By ALAN WALD

*Communists in Harlem During the Great Depression*, by Mark Naison. University of Illinois Press, 1983, 335 pp., \$19.95.

A young professor of Afro-American studies at Fordham University and a veteran of the New Left, Mark Naison is part of a new generation of radical scholars dedicated to reassessing the history of the Communist Party of the United States. Naison and his associates tend to be critical of Stalinism but are unwilling to accept earlier depictions of the Communist movement as a conspiracy of dupes following orders from Moscow in lockstep fashion. Conse-

## BOOK REVIEW

quently, they have returned to a study of primary materials—publications, collections of papers, documents, and personal interviews—in order to humanize the participants in the Communist movement and examine the practical work of the party with greater subtlety.

*Communists in Harlem during the Great Depression* is perhaps the outstanding work of this school to date, typifying the strengths as well as weaknesses of this endeavor. Naison provides a careful scrutiny of what was actually done in Harlem by the Communists between 1928 and 1941, as well as a portrait of the men and women who carried out the work.

The book's strength lies in its description of specific episodes that recapture the central experiences of the era. Two of the most dramatic are the recreations of the 1935 uprising known as the "Harlem Riot," and the 25,000-strong mass mobilization of Blacks and whites in Harlem against the Italian invasion of Ethiopia. Naison also provides well-crafted vignettes of many party and non-party figures.

The Communists began their work in Harlem in the late 1920s with about 15 members, mostly West Indians. Under directives from the party leadership, scores of white members—mostly second-generation East European Jews who worked as teachers and social workers—moved into Harlem and began agitating. Following the national success of its defense campaign for the "Scottsboro Boys" (nine Black youths framed up on rape charges in the South), the party continued to grow until it reached nearly 1000 by the end of the thirties.

### Popular Front strategy

The turning point for all of Communist history in the Depression is unquestionably the adoption of the Popular Front strategy in 1935. At the behest of the Communist International [under Stalin], the American Party switched from an ultra-revolutionary orientation to a liberal one that included backhanded support to Franklin Delano

Roosevelt. In Harlem, the mass mobilizations that were the hallmark of the party in the early 1930s were progressively displaced by an emphasis on electoral organizations, and the more nationalist West Indian leaders were replaced by less independent-minded Afro-Americans with an inflexible integrationist perspective.

Unfortunately, it is precisely in coming to grips with this crucial phenomenon that Naison falters. He does aptly point out specific problems and weaknesses stemming from the Popular Front. These include the disastrous series of political turn-about that came at the time of the Hitler-Stalin Pact (the Communists had to drop their support for Frank Crosswaith's candidacy in mid-election, switching to Adam Clayton Powell, who kept silent about Stalin's treachery), and the decline of militancy caused by the Communists' decision to support the United States government during World War II.

Nevertheless, Naison's assessment of the Popular Front is ambiguous: Is he only distressed because the Communists

acted undemocratically, hypocritically, and on orders from a foreign power? Or does he also understand that Popular Front strategy itself (the subordination of independent working-class politics to the liberal bourgeoisie) was a political disaster for the left and the Black liberation struggle?

### Lacks perspective

There is no question that *Communists in Harlem* is a work of serious scholarship dedicated to the goal of interracial solidarity. However, in spite of its accomplishment in humanizing the Communist movement and providing new details, the book is rather sketchy when it comes to projecting policies that might have led to greater success.

Naison obviously favors greater autonomy for Black party members and suggests that the formation of all-Black party branches and cultural organizations might have resolved certain tensions. But he lacks a clear and incisive perspective on a strategy for Black liberation that shows an effective relation-

ship for Black and white militants, such as can be found in George Breitman's useful pamphlet *How a Minority Can Change Society* (Merit, 1968).

Without a cogent theorization of the class forces involved in the struggle, as well as the dynamics of national oppression, Naison's book actually lends itself to fostering a variety of political conclusions, including the very liberal anti-communism that under certain circumstances gave birth to the kind of scholarship that Naison and his associates are trying to transcend.

Still, the data made available in *Communists in Harlem* will assist contemporary Marxist activists in assessing the meaning of various debates and the correctness of certain policies, positions, and attitudes. It will be the integration of Breitman's kind of theoretical consciousness about political strategy with Naison's kind of careful empirical research into the experience of predecessor socialists, that will bring about the full recovery of our radical heritage and enable us to continue our efforts to eradicate racism. ■

## Fourth International sponsors youth summer camp

By ABRA QUINN

The Black Forest region of West Germany was the scene of an exciting event July 20-29. Over 600 young socialist activists—average age 21—gathered to exchange ideas and strategies. They came from mass movements as varied as the school strikes in Belgium and the enormous and still-growing Youth Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (YCND) in Britain.

The event was the first of a planned series of International Youth Summer Camps sponsored by youth organizations in solidarity with the Fourth International.

The largest delegations were those of the Roter Maulwurf (Red Mole) from West Germany, with 150 people, and the Jeunesses Communistes Revolutionaires (Revolutionary Communist Youth), with about 120 from France. Other countries represented by substantial delegations were Switzerland, Italy, Sweden, Denmark, and Great Britain. Spain was represented by about 30 young people, many of whom were Catalan or Basque. Austria, the Netherlands, Belgium, and Luxembourg sent smaller contingents, and People's Democracy, the section of the Fourth International in Ireland (which does not have a youth group) sent three members and two observers. One representative came from each of the sections in the Antilles, Bolivia, Iceland, Quebec, Japan, New Zealand, Sri Lanka, Israel, and Chile.

Coming from the United States were two members of Socialist Action, as well as two members of the Young Socialist Alliance, the youth group associated with the Socialist Workers Party.

The well-organized program of the camp included a general presentation each morning on a selected topic. One workshop, for instance, covered the intensified effect of the world economic crisis on youth. In the afternoon, smaller groups gathered for further discussion on such subjects as the reactions among youth to the economic crisis, the



"Roter Maulwurf," symbol of the German youth group of the Fourth International

rising squatters' movements throughout Europe, or the Youth Training Schemes in Britain. Other themes for meetings included the fights against the missiles and militarization, against racism, and

against the oppression of women. Evenings were filled with film showings, informal discussions, and disco.

The most important aspect of the camp was the unique opportunity to hear about work that other youth organizations all over the world were doing and to exchange ideas and discuss tactics. The high point occurred with the visit of Uriel Ortega, the representative of Juventud Sandinista, the youth organization of the FSLN, on the day devoted to Central American solidarity. Ortega was welcomed with a full-scale demonstration and the singing of the Sandinista national anthem. One of the practical fruits of this collaboration was a meeting between the heads of each delegation and Ortega in order to plan for a second European tour of young Nicaraguans.

The camp provided an opportunity to create closer ties and promote mutual confidence and respect among young people and their organizations from all over the world. It closed with a resolution to send more young people to the next Fourth International Summer Youth Camp. ■

## Free Rafael Taveras

The following letter from the delegations of the Dominican Left Front (FID) and the Socialist Bloc (BS) in Europe is reprinted from the Sept. 17 *International Viewpoint*.

Rafael Taveras, known as Fafa, an FID leader and the general secretary of the Socialist Bloc, was arrested on the evening of Aug. 29.

Three days previously the military high command of the country had accused the left of conspiring against the security of the state, and having received funds from Libya and North Korea for this purpose. These serious accusations, totally unfounded, put into danger the life of the revolutionary leader Fafa Taveras and mark the start of a new wave of repression against leaders of the popular movement.

The repression, which has already brought about more than 100 deaths, 500 wounded, and 4000 imprisonments, remains the only official response to the rise in protests against the starvation policy imposed by the government on the recommendation of the International Monetary Fund.

Given the seriousness of the charges made by the government, we call on world public opinion to demand that Fafa Taveras be set free and that human rights be respected in the Dominican Republic.

Send protest telegrams to:  
Salvador Jorge Blanco, President of the Republic, Palacio Nacional, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic.

Send a copy to:  
Periodico *La Noticia*, Julio Vernes 14, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic.

### Distributors of *Socialist Action* in Canada:

Socialist Workers Collective  
412A College St.  
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Socialist Challenge  
Box 12082  
Edmonton, Alta.

*Abra Quinn, a member of Socialist Action who graduated from high school last June, represented Socialist Action at the Fourth International Youth Camp.*



## Here today, gone Monday

By MICHAEL SCHREIBER

Ever have a blue Monday when nothing seems to work? Employees showed up at a Detroit warehouse one morning and found that *nobody* could work! Their company had moved over the weekend to Indiana. "We regret we could not give the employees prior notice," said Carl Patterson, president of Slater-Standard Wallcovering, Inc. He emphasized that the move was made clandestinely because of "concern for the security of our computer system."

Out of the sweet goodness of their hearts U.S. corporations owning factories in Mexico have begun "to pay workers above the Mexican minimum wage of \$4.80 a day," the *Wall Street Journal* reports with some astonishment. "One company is considering giving watches to workers with good attendance and longevity records. Another is giving out Michael Jackson albums."

High school graduate and former cheerleader Ronald Reagan led his own pep rally last month before a group of seventh graders in Washington, D.C. Reagan advised the youngsters not to worry about the lack of modern facilities at their inner city school. "I attended six elementary schools myself," said Reagan, who grew up to become a top-of-the-line drummer for Boraxo soap. "In none of them was there a library."

So what if Reagan chops wood and invades Grenada and wears a cowboy hat and talks dirty to the Russians? "On male issues Mondale is solid," insists Democratic Party campaign advisor Robert Strauss. "Mondale is sort of a man's man... He likes to sit around and have a drink in the evening with his shoes off and a cigar in his mouth."

As long as there's a strong woman around to pick up the ashes, right?

Pope John Paul II wound up his crusade for responsible sex education last month with a stinging rebuke to Catholics who plan to limit the size of their families. His Holiness asserted that amorous couples often display "an ignorance of the theology of the body, of the magnificent plan of God for conjugal union."

Of course, a person might speculate about the magnificent plan for feeding and caring for additional children. We expect the Vatican will send the answer in a plain brown wrapper. ■

## Fight back!

### Calif. proposition 41 cuts welfare to the poor

If Proposition 41 passes this Nov. 6, child abuse will become legal in the state of California. Income support (AFDC) for an unemployed mother and her two children will plummet from the current \$555 per month to \$330 or even less. For many children this will mean a severe cut in their food supply. AFDC families are already living below the poverty level. Deliberate starvation of children certainly comes under the heading of child abuse.

Other effects of Proposition 41, if it passes, will be the following: Medi-cal cuts by more than one-third, affecting 700,000 elderly, blind, and disabled people; foster care cut by one-half, affecting 27,000 abused and neglected children; and support for already needy families cut by one-half, bringing deprivation and hunger to 1 million children who are already at the bottom of the economic heap.

What a social system! The rich wallow like pigs in their wealth while ballot initiatives like Proposition 41 attempt to reduce children and old people into an ever-increasing condition of hardship and degradation.

Homeless roam our streets looking for a place to lay their heads. Little children wear door keys around their necks. Politicians give parties costing hundreds of thousands of dollars, such as the ones thrown by Willie Brown and San Francisco Mayor Dianne Feinstein during the Democratic Party convention.

The \$500,000 that went into just these two parties could have built childcare centers. It could have increased the food supply for the elderly. It could have been used for shelters for our homeless. Callous politicians tend to fiddle while our cities burn. We should remind them of what happened to Nero.

Proposition 41 is disaster on the march. Stop it! Join Californians Against Prop. 41, 2936 McClure Street, Oakland, CA, 94609. Call (415) 893-0945. ■

*Sylvia Weinstein*

Sylvia Weinstein

Socialist Action candidate for San Francisco Board of Supervisors

## A clarification

Dear Editor,

I am outraged by the appearance of a letter in the September issue of *Socialist Action* written by Milt Zaslow. Those responsible for publishing this letter without first sending me a copy of it for my comments made a mistake.

The Zaslow letter distorts Cochran's position on the necessity of building a revolutionary party here in the United States. In April 1953, the time from which Zaslow quotes, some seven months before Cochran and his associates were suspended from the Socialist Workers Party, he could hardly have received a hearing from the membership without advocating the building of a party.

By the medium of transference, Zaslow has attributed to Cochran what was probably his own position, that is, of wanting more of a party-like structure, a position that ultimately led to a split between those who agreed with Cochran and those who agreed with Zaslow.

To settle this I will give a brief quote from Cannon taken from his book, "Speeches to the Party," (Pathfinder Press, New York, 1973, p.179). Here is what Cannon said in summing up the nature of the Cochran group:

"Nobody can imagine these people even daring to contemplate the idea of launching a new party and an agitational paper. First of all, they don't believe in their own capacity to build a party. Second, they don't believe in the capacity of anyone to build a party. And in the third place, they don't believe in a revolutionary vanguard party. So they are not going to confront us with a rival party claiming to be the Trotskyist vanguard and the nucleus of the future mass party of the revolution."

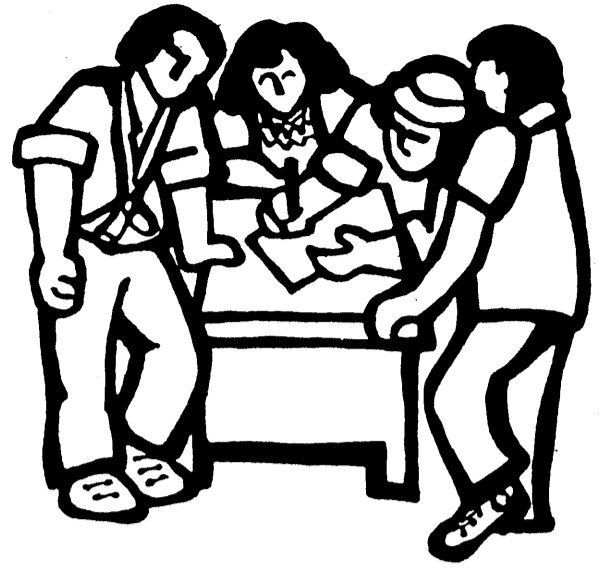
Milton Alvin  
Los Angeles

## Reader responds

Dear Editor,

Charles Post's "Lesser evil won't work this time either" (September *Socialist Action*) provides good reasons for why workers shouldn't support either Democrats or Republicans this November. The problem with the article, the way I see it, is that it doesn't have good suggestions for what workers can do.

People who work for a living need their own political party. How else can workers hope to fight back against the bipartisan austerity drive the



ruling rich are leveling against us through their government?

The labor unions need to organize their own party that can speak for all workers in the elections. A labor party would give the unions the leverage they need to unify and fight for the working class as a whole.

The labor unions have the organization, the membership, the size, and the resources to realistically launch an independent political party. Labor could start right now by using the millions of dollars of COPE (Committee on Political Education) funds to help finance a labor party. Such a party is long overdue in American politics.

A positive electoral action workers can take in this election is to vote for the Socialist Workers Party campaign of Mel Mason for President and Andrea Gonzalez for Vice President. These socialists are running against both capitalist parties, against U.S. intervention in Central America, for the rights of women, for Black liberation struggles and minority rights, and for the idea of a labor party.

Carole Seligman  
San Francisco

## Copper miners

Dear Editor,

My trip to Clifton-Morenci, Ariz., over the Labor Day weekend was tiring but exciting. The trip was arranged by the Copper Miners' Support Committee. Forty-seven of us took off on Saturday night and arrived at Clifton at 10 a.m. on Sunday. On the trip down, music filled the bus; union songs and radical Latino songs.

We found Clifton to be an old town with narrow streets and broken windows that no one bothered to repair. We went straight to the Union Hall, where there was real excitement at our arrival. Miners came in to greet us. The solidarity of these miners

after 15 months of struggle amazed us.

In the afternoon, there was a Labor Day celebration. I was one of the speakers. But more important were the speeches of one miner after another expressing the solidarity of miners whose families had worked in the mines for generations. Our busload just added to the celebration of solidarity of these magnificent fighters.

I asked a leader's wife how they could remain so solid after such a long struggle. She took me to the graveyard and pointed to the monuments: "Our fathers worked the mines. They are buried here. Here are the graves of our grandparents, and in many cases, our great-grandparents. This is our land."

She then took us to the pit. It must be three-fourths of a mile across and about one-half mile deep. What a rape of the land! The multinational corporation takes no responsibility for what it has done to this mountain land.

While there is a great feeling of solidarity in Clifton, there is also great tension. There is a real line between the scabs and the townspeople. The scabs are primarily imports from other areas, and the anger boils over into stores, schools, churches.

The town is ringed by D.P.S. (state cops) cars. Hundreds ring the town. Here is a classic example of a "liberal" Democratic governor, whose velvet glove covers an iron fist. None of the so-called liberals like Rep. Morris Udall have helped the miners. They offer sympathy in words while remaining "neutral."

Hatred for the D.P.S. is intense.

It's interesting that wherever a group of striking miners gathers, the favorite cry is "Union! Union! Union!"

Dave Cooper  
Los Angeles

**We welcome letters from our readers. Please keep them brief. Where necessary they will be abridged.**

# Socialist ACTION

WHERE TO FIND US:

**Boston Socialist Action**  
P.O. Box 1046 GMF  
Boston, MA 02205

**Chicago Socialist Action**  
Box 80 B 2520 N. Lincoln  
Chicago, IL 60614  
(312) 248-1094

**Buffalo Socialist Action**  
P.O. Box 275  
Buffalo, N.Y. 14207

**Cincinnati Socialist Action**  
P.O. Box 3033  
Cincinnati, OH 45201  
(513) 242-9043

**Cleveland Socialist Action**  
P.O. Box 6151  
Cleveland, OH 44101  
(216) 429-2167

**Houston Socialist Action**  
University of Houston  
Box 551, 4800 Calhoun  
Houston, TX 77004  
(713) 643-2030

**Los Angeles Socialist Action**  
18653 Ventura Blvd  
Box 217  
Los Angeles, CA 91356  
(213) 343-4511

**Michigan Socialist Action**  
P.O. Box 4523  
Ann Arbor, MI 48106

**Minneapolis Socialist Action**  
P.O. Box 14087  
Dinkytown Station  
Minneapolis, MN 55414

**New York Socialist Action**  
P.O. Box 20209  
Cathedral Finance  
693 Columbus Ave  
New York, NY 10025

**Phoenix Socialist Action**  
P.O. Box 5161  
Phoenix, AZ 85010  
(602) 894-0055

**Pittsburgh Socialist Action**  
P.O. Box 10769  
Pittsburgh, PA 15203

**Puget Sound Socialist Action**  
P.O. Box 2903  
Olympia, WA 98507

**San Francisco Socialist Action**  
3435 Army Street, Rm. 308  
San Francisco, CA 94110  
(415) 821-0458

**Washington Socialist Action**  
P.O. Box 3467  
Washington, D.C. 20010  
(202) 232-1481

**West Virginia Socialist Action**  
P.O. Box 701  
Fairmont, WV 26555-0701

## Women's peace camps target U.S. missiles

By NANCY GRUBER

The Women's Peace Camp at Greenham Common (Berkshire, England) issued a call in June for 10 million women to come to Greenham Sept. 20-30 to celebrate the third anniversary of the founding of the encampment. Women from other encampments all over the world, including a number from the Women's Encampment for a Future of Peace and Justice just outside the Seneca Army Depot in Romulus, N.Y., responded to the call. The base at Greenham is the launching site for Cruise and Pershing II missiles, which are shipped to it from the Seneca Depot.

Utilizing an idea at least as old as 411 B.C.—when Greek playwright Aristophanes' heroine, Lysistrata, called upon the women of all the states of Greece to join together, "take" the Acropolis, and refuse to sleep with their men until they had agreed to end the "madness" of war—women in the United States, Western Europe, and Australia, inspired by the Greenham example, have been joining together in the encampments. They are enduring physical hardship and arrest as they engage in acts of civil disobedience to express their profound repugnance at U.S. militarism.

### The main targets

Great Britain, with its 102 U.S. air bases, has been the location of the most persistent and effective activity—activity which has created linkages with other countries and other struggles. The Sept. 17 *International Viewpoint* reports that one of the first acts of the striking coal miners' wives was to send a delegation to Greenham to express their support. The Greenham women have reciprocated by appearing on the miners' platforms and on the picket lines.

Another English encampment has been established by men and women outside the base at Upper Heyford where F1-11 long-range aircraft are stationed. Here, as at Greenham, the seven gates of the base are occupied and periodically blockaded.

Well into its second year is La Ragnatela, Donne per La Pace [the Spider's Web, Women for Peace], situated in Comiso, Sicily. This camp grew up in response to the arrest and trial of 12 women for their participation in an International Women's Day demonstration at the Magliocco NATO airbase in March 1983.

The women, seven of whom had come from Greenham, repeatedly blockaded the entrance to the base where 112 cruise missiles are now deployed and aimed at the Middle East. According to the June 1984 *Womanews* they were imprisoned for six days, subjected to gratuitous violence resulting in broken arms for one woman, and were to be deported immediately to England.

The deportation order was lifted for the trial, which resulted in a significant legal victory for the women's peace movement. The Sicilian magistrate's court found the women not guilty of blockade and trespass, conceding that they had extenuating motives "of particular moral value."

The juridical acceptance of moral arguments for nonviolent direct action against nuclear weapons sets an important precedent, especially in view of the fact that Greenham women had been attempting unsuccessfully to base their defense on such an argument.

### Seneca women

In the United States the focus of the encampment movement seems to be slightly different than in Europe. The several thousand women who have passed through the Seneca encampment during the last two summers have come not only to express their outrage at the deployment of Cruise and Pershing II



Women at Seneca, N.Y. peace camp

missiles in Europe, but—equally important to them—also to build an alternative all-women community.

As Andrea Doremus, a coordinator of the Seneca camp, expresses it:

"The Cruise and Pershing II missiles are the most extreme examples of a whole society that has totally warped priorities—where profit and violence and greed are above human need. So we focus on the Cruise and Pershing and say: 'Here is the most blatant example of a world gone crazy. And yet we're also trying to create an alternative way of inter-

acting... to build something positive while we're saying no to something else.'"

This effort to create an alternative society in microcosm has had two aspects this past summer, according to Doremus. The women are attempting to build a safe and legal living space on the 52 acres of land now owned by the encampment and open to visitors until Oct. 31 of this year. The camp was granted its health permit this summer by dint of a massive effort and the running up of a large debt.

The encampment is also now giving top priority to educational work, both

## National teach-in called on Central America

By ALAN WALD

Faculty for Human Rights in El Salvador and Central America (FACHRES-CA), a national organization of university professors, has issued a statement calling for Oct. 24, 1984, to be a day of education and protest against U.S. policy in Central America and the Caribbean. The chosen date is also the first anniversary of the U.S. invasion of Grenada.

The statement, signed by seven professors, urges that Oct. 24 be a day when "no business as usual" occurs on the campuses. Referring to the teach-ins that helped initiate and build the movement against U.S. involvement in Vietnam in the 1960s, FACHRES-CA proposes that a schedule of counteractivities to ordinary university classes be planned to discuss the nature of U.S. involvement and strategies for opposing it.

FACHRES-CA was formed several years ago in response to a wave of repression against faculty and students in El Salvador. For example, on June 26, 1980, Dr. Felix Ulloa, the rector of the University of El Salvador, was assassinated. Then, on Feb. 10, 1981, 20 members of the High University Council were seized during a meeting of the Council and subsequently imprisoned without charge for nearly two months. By June 1981, the junta was already responsible for almost 2000 violent deaths in the academic community throughout the country, including 179 teachers and 1005 students.

More recently, FACHRES-CA has expanded its activities to include a variety of efforts to study and criticize U.S. policy throughout the region, as it affects many aspects of Central American and Caribbean society. These activities include the sending of fact-finding delegations of professors to El Salvador and Nicaragua. Upon their return they hold press conferences and issue reports. Also, FACHRES-CA organizes campaigns to save the lives of political prisoners, makes resources available for

teach-ins, and issues a number of publications and newsletters.

At the present time, in addition to organizing for Oct. 24, FACHRES-CA is collecting signatures of hundreds of professors from across the country to appear in an ad in the *New York Times*

within the camp and in the surrounding community. Three "days of focus" were conducted during the summer, with workshops and discussions built around important issues. These included a Labor Day weekend workshop on the problems of conversion of war industry to peaceful uses.

High on the agenda for the winter months, according to Doremus, will be the building of a network of women all over the country who can utilize information and experience acquired from Seneca to create more such communities.

The July 1984 *Nuclear Times* reports that there are now at least five other encampments in the United States. The newest, the Women's Peace Presence to Stop Project ELF (a proposed Navy communications system for nuclear submarines), located 300 miles north of Madison, Wis., opened on Memorial Day.

Other encampments include the Silence One Silo Peace Camp near Great Falls, Mont.; the Savannah River Peace Encampment near Athens, Ga.; the Minnesota Women's Camp for Peace and Justice in St. Paul; and the Puget Sound Women's Peace Camp in Kent, Wash.

Information requests about the Seneca encampment and urgently needed contributions can be sent to The Women's Encampment for a Future of Peace and Justice, 5440 Rt. 96, Romulus, N.Y. 14541.

in October. This ad will demand complete withdrawal of U.S. support to "contras" and to reactionary regimes in Central America. It calls upon the American people to keep up their protests and not to imagine that any supposed peace candidates in the elections are going to end U.S. intervention.

Further information about FACHRES-CA can be obtained by writing to: Room 613 Eshelman Hall, University of California, Berkeley, CA. 94720 (415-642-7783)

## 'Repo Man'—punk culture at its funniest

By LARRY COOPERMAN

*Repo Man* is a surreal comedy about a young man, Otto, who is lured into the semi-illegal trade of auto repossession. Woven into the daily life of this young man are grocery store robberies, gang fights, and random threats and acts of violence. And throughout this film, an older man, sometimes half-dead, is driving around in a brown Chevy Malibu whose trunk, when opened, can vaporize a human being, leaving nothing standing but its victim's boots.

### MOVIE REVIEW

There is more to this film, however, than just random acts of violence. There is a romantic interest, as well. The hero, or anti-hero, meets a young woman who is trying to escape several men who are pursuing her because she knows the truth about the contents of the brown Chevy Malibu's trunk. He gives her a lift, hears her story, believes none of it, and asks her for a date. At the end of the ride, and after a brief unpleasant exchange between the two, they hop, in accelerated motion, into the back seat of his repossessed car and initiate a brief relationship that is characterized by passion, torture, and, in the end, aloofness.

The characters in this film, all decked out in the finest punk chic, have a few

things in common: They do not care about anybody else—not family, friends, or lovers—and they have no objectives beside immediate ones (rob the grocery store, repossess the car, drive around in a brown Chevy Malibu). For that reason, and because it is filled with comic situations and dialogue, this film is destined to become a cult classic.

The nihilism of *Repo Man*, the total absence of comprehensible objectives or actions, is a reflection of punk culture. The film is filled with a clear contempt for the existing society; it parodies the American family, work situations, cops, friendships, and relationships. Yet, *Repo Man* offers no hope of any change from the bleakness of the situation.

Punk culture has represented a form of youth protest of bourgeois morality. As with other cultural forms, it can be filled with different, even contradictory contents. That is why there are so many punks who are consciously left-wing, while others display—pierced through their cheeks—swastikas. It is therefore interesting to contrast the apolitical style of *Repo Man* to the Clash's film, *Rude Boy*, in which the protest against bourgeois society is focused around the struggle against racism in Britain.

Despite its limitations, *Repo Man* is a very funny film. It is currently on its second life—after a first release failed to attract the movie-going crowd. If your car hasn't been repossessed, go see it.