

A Socialist ACTION

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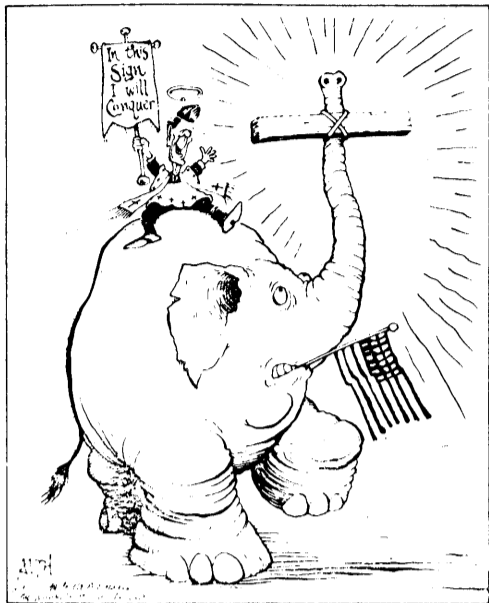
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GOP injects God into '84 elections

By HAYDEN PERRY

For the first time in the history of the republic God has endorsed a presidential candidate. Ronald Reagan and the Republican Party, it is announced, are "leaders under God's authority."

Fundamentalist minister Jerry Falwell revealed that Reagan and vice presidential candidate George Bush are "God's instruments for rebuilding America."

Reagan himself has said that "religion and politics are necessarily related," and those who oppose his religious views "are against religion."

Jerry Falwell put it more strongly, saying, "The idea that religion and politics don't mix was invented by the devil to keep Christians from running their own country."

It was not the devil but bitter experience and class interest that led the framers of the Constitution to ban the mixing of religion and politics—to put a wall of separation between church and state. They were aware of the religious wars that had plagued Europe, the horrors of the Holy Inquisition, and the Salem witch hunt that led to the hanging of 19 innocent women in 1692.

They were determined that religion would never be a political issue in the new nation. There is no mention of God in the Constitution. The First Amendment says, "Congress shall make no law respecting the establishment of a religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof. . . ."

The right of a citizen to adhere to any religion, or to no religion, was held inviolate for all time.

Cracks in the wall

For nearly 200 years the wall between church and state has held. Most Protestant churches have supported the principle, and 267 religious denominations have grown or declined free of any state coercion. The 68 million people who profess no church affiliation have felt no government pressure to become believers.

The wall has stood, but there have been numerous attempts to breach it. Now it is starting to crumble under the

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Coalition calls April 13 national antiwar actions

By CARL FINAMORE

WASHINGTON, D.C.—A call for national demonstrations on April 13, 1985, against U.S. intervention in Central America was issued here on Oct. 23 by a broad range of peace, religious, and antiwar organizations. The demonstrations are being planned for Washington, D.C., Seattle, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Denver.

Other activities being organized in conjunction with the April 13 demonstrations include teach-ins at schools and campuses around the country on April 12 and local lobbying during the week prior to April 13.

In addition, in Washington, D.C., there will be a candlelight vigil that will encircle the White House in the evening after the demonstration. On Sunday, April 14, religious groups are planning inter-faith services for peace in Central America. Finally, on April 15, "a day of citizen protest" will occur, which will include non-violent civil disobedience and lobbying.

The Oct. 23 meeting endorsed the three major themes for the demonstrations agreed upon by an initial meeting of these groups last Sept. 25. These are "No U.S. intervention in Central America and the Caribbean," "Money for jobs, not for war," and "No nuclear weapons."

The meeting also approved a motion to add a fourth theme to the demonstration, calling for "opposition to U.S. support to apartheid in South Africa."

A national call for mobilization is being written which will incorporate the main demands adopted.

The groups present at the Oct. 23 meeting included the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES), Mobilization for Survival, American Friends Service Committee, SANE, U.S. Peace Council, Grey Panthers, National Freeze Campaign, Vote Peace Campaign, Reform Church, United Church of Christ, and various Nicaraguan and Guatemalan solidarity groups. The coalition will select a name for itself at its next meeting on Nov. 29 in Washington, D.C.

Representatives from the Emergency National Conference Against U.S.



Reagan/Mondale
See Pages 2-3

Nicaragua elections. See pp. 7-9



Roberta Lichtman/Vision Fotos

"Voting is a duty; Choosing is a right!" February rally in Masaya, Nicaragua.

Intervention in Central America and the Caribbean, which initiated the call for national April demonstrations at a conference in Cleveland on Sept. 14-16, attended the meeting to present their ideas on broadening the coalition structure beyond the initial groups in attendance.

Build local coalitions

A report by one of the Emergency National Conference representatives on coalition building in San Francisco was well received. Several national groups volunteered to contact local San Francisco Bay Area affiliates about joining with the initial efforts taken by Al Lannon, president of International Longshore and Warehouse Union, Local 6, to build a broad coalition for the San Francisco demonstration.

Yet, unfortunately, some problems remain. The meeting did approve a procedure for involving other national groups in its structure. But the majority sentiment was to keep the steering committee small. In fact, the People's Anti-

war Mobilization (PAM), a coalition that played a central role in the May 3, 1981, demonstration of 100,000 people in Washington, D.C., was denied a spot on the steering committee.

Jim Lafferty, a representative of the Emergency National Conference, spoke against excluding PAM or any other organization that supported the demands of the call. He stressed the need for a broad, independent, and non-exclusionary movement.

Suzanne Kelly, a staff representative and past president of the Virginia Education Association, proposed that each local coalition have one spot on the national steering committee. But this proposal was tabled.

Socialist Action calls on its readers and supporters to help build local coalitions for the April 13 demonstrations. They offer an opportunity for hundreds of thousands of people to express their opposition in the streets to the U.S. war in Central America in the most powerful and effective way. All out for April 13!

Canadian auto workers reject UAW contract

By NAT WEINSTEIN

About 36,000 Canadian auto workers struck General Motors on Oct. 17. The strike by Ontario- and Quebec-based members of the United Auto Workers follows on the heels of agreements with Ford and GM in the United States. A ratification vote conducted among the 350,000 who work for GM plants in the United States was reported at the same time that a tentative agreement reached between UAW negotiators and Ford in

the United States was announced. The narrowly approved U.S. GM contract—138,410 to 102,528—represents a continuation of an ongoing retreat by the Owen Bieber-led union negotiators.

The tentative UAW pact with Ford is reportedly similar to the one adopted by U.S. GM workers. The Ford agreement provides for the same basic wage package which amounts to a 15-cent-an-hour pay raise to \$12.82. This is less than the present rate of inflation. And these con-

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Black activist assesses Jackson campaign

By KWAME M. A. SOMBURU

I spoke recently with Kenneth Nunn, a Black community activist who worked here in Oakland, Calif., in the Jesse Jackson campaign. Nunn, like many supporters of the Rainbow Coalition, became critical of Jackson for tying his campaign to Democratic Party policy.

Nunn told me that he had met the Rev. Jackson in Birmingham, Ala., when Jackson was first talking about running for president. "I was opposed to his running," Nunn said. "I thought he represented an old-line middle-class attitude toward the problems that Black people face. I saw this in his efforts to get agreements with business corporations that had no impact upon the needs of most Black people."



Jesse Jackson

Nunn continued, "Later, I heard him talk while gearing up for his campaign in Atlanta and in Washington, D.C. It was clear to me then that Jackson was the only public figure who was talking about poor peoples' issues. At the March on Washington in August of last year everyone else was saying, 'Let's make some kind of memorial about everything that happened in the past.' Only Jackson, as far as the major speakers were concerned, focused on doing something for poor people now. I thought it was important to support him while he was making those kinds of statements."

Nunn believes that the Jackson campaign was successful in putting forth a positive self-image for

Black people. "I think that Jackson's presence, his obvious intelligence and articulateness, and his command of the issues was a good thing, for example, for a young Black kid who watches TV and ordinarily sees things from the view of white corporate America," Nunn emphasized.

"As far as political development is concerned," Nunn continued, "the problem with the Rainbow Coalition was that no real efforts were made to mobilize Black people as an independent movement. There were only top-down efforts to get Black people into the Democratic Party. The problem is that, once the election is over, there will be no on-going pressure for social activism. No structure, no ideology, no nothing."

Nunn believes that Jesse Jackson's statements of loyalty to the Democratic Party throughout his campaign were simply a tactical maneuver taken "in order to avoid a lot of divisive struggling."

Nevertheless, this was a mistake, Nunn told me. "It reduced Jackson to a bulldog on a chain," he said. "Jackson chained himself by saying that he was not going to leave the Democratic Party, that he was not going to put forth demands that the party had to accept in order to maintain what was an uneasy alliance in the first place."

Congressional Black Caucus

We discussed the recent gathering of the Congressional Black Caucus, which took place on Sept. 30. About 15,000 Blacks participated. The headline on the article in the *New York Times* that reported on the meeting read: "Pessimism marks gathering of Black lawmakers."

Nunn pointed out that Jesse Jackson was present at the September meeting, although he had been ostracized by members of the Black Caucus a year ago. "When Jackson first started his movement," Nunn said, "there was a realignment of forces. The people supporting Jackson were young. They were militant. They wanted to see some changes happen-

ing right then and there. The people who were counseling Jackson not to run—Coretta Scott King, Benjamin Hooks, and others who represented a staid old accommodationist viewpoint—were getting pushed out by the Jackson campaign."

He continued, "It seems now that the Jackson movement has slowed down to a trickle or a stop. And Jackson's presence at the Black Caucus meeting means he must have become a lot more acceptable to that grouping."

Nunn believes that the lack of leadership by Black politicians was demonstrated at the time of the U.S. invasion of Grenada. "They knew it was wrong. They had information. Some of them had long-running contacts with the revolutionary government of Grenada. But they felt that it would be politically suicidal to take the government to task for its actions."

I pointed out that Jesse Jackson has continued to campaign for Mondale, even though Mondale has said that if he had been president a year ago, he, too, would have ordered an invasion of the island. "I think the proper response of the Black leadership should have been to immediately condemn Walter Mondale for his remarks," Nunn replied. "They should have put the heat on him and forced him to retract that statement if the Democrats were interested in getting their support."

I asked Nunn his opinion of an event in September in which the Mississippi chairman of the Rainbow Coalition, Johnny Walls, decided not to run as an independent Black candidate for the Senate. Jesse Jackson had asked him to withdraw in favor of the white Democratic Party nominee.

"I think that was probably a big mistake," Nunn responded. "It goes back to the old lesser of two evils. I think that Jackson was doing a lot of singing and dancing on behalf of the Democratic Party at this point in time."

"It would be good for a Black to run as an independent," Nunn concluded, "because that is going to get Black people to organize their own institutions even if they don't elect an individual to office. As a matter of fact, we've had Black people in the House and Senate for a number of years, yet things have been worse politically and economically for Blacks in the last ten years than during the Great Depression. I think that running an independent Black candidate will demonstrate the ability that Black people can have as a political group." ■

By MARY E. JANZEN

Despite overcast skies and sporadic drizzle, over 15,000 spirited demonstrators participated in a mile-long march down Chicago's Michigan Ave. to Grant Park. The march culminated there in a nuclear-freeze rally sponsored by more than 265 church groups, freeze activists, union locals, peace and women's organizations, liberal Democrats, socialist organizations, and Central America solidarity and anti-intervention forces.

The Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES), Casa El Salvador, and other solidarity organizations joined the demonstration, as did community-based anti-intervention groups such as the Evanston Committee on Central America. The participation of these groups signified the success of the freeze movement's first attempt to build a major demonstration incorporating anti-intervention issues. "No more Vietnams" was a major slogan, along with "Meet Human Needs" and "Nuclear Freeze Now."

Among the rally speakers were leaders of the freeze movement, including Randall Forsberg and Dr. Helen Caldicott; former UAW President Leonard Woodcock; longtime peace activist David Dellinger; the Rev. Jesse Jackson; Guadalupe Gonzalez of El Salvador's Revolutionary Democratic Front (FDR); and disabled Vietnam veteran Ron Kovic.

Although "Dump Reagan" and "Vote Peace" were major themes of most speakers, anti-intervention concerns were raised as well. "Every Third World nation is threatened with intervention by the Reagan administration," said Chicago Mayor Harold Washington. Washington blasted the cost of the arms race, pointing out that the Chicago public schools could run a year for the price of a single Trident missile and

15,000 march in Chicago against U.S. war drive and nuclear weapons



Socialist Action/Judy Hill

Socialist Action banner at Oct. 13 march in Chicago. Although march highlighted "Dump Reagan" (vote Mondale) themes in its demands and major speakers, it reflected the deep antiwar sentiment of millions of U.S. citizens.

the cost of just one B-1 bomber would operate the Chicago Transit Authority for the same period.

Guadalupe Gonzalez of the FDR noted that nuclear war would probably start in the Third World, with the escalation of a conventional war. "We should not lose sight of why these wars start. The U.S. government fears the new economic order which would result from a victory of the FDR/FMLN in El Salvador," Gonzalez said, "because it would mark the beginning of a new relationship between Central America and the United States."

The Rev. Jesse Jackson was greeted with warm applause as he introduced

the Sanchez family from El Salvador, to whom Operation Push has extended sanctuary. He called for the peace movement to reach out and "make room for everybody"—to speak out for women, for the oppressed in South Africa—and to make the Western Hemisphere a "war-free zone."

Among those at the rally as the drizzle turned to a downpour were hundreds of high school and college students who had come from as far as Michigan, Indiana, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, and southern Illinois. Senior citizens, including a contingent of Gray Panthers, mingled with young families pushing babies in strollers.

Participation by union rank and file was, unfortunately, relatively sparse.

Although the rally turned out far fewer than the 50,000 predicted by its organizers, it pointed to a new direction for the peace movement by bringing together freeze and anti-intervention organizations for a unified demonstration. While the only road to peace offered by the majority of the speakers was a vote for Walter Mondale, the demonstration could have posed the real alternative: the mobilization of thousands in the streets around issues affecting their lives, independent of both the Democratic and Republican parties. ■

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Mondale/Reagan advisers: It's all in the family

By RALPH SCHOENMAN

Since the Democratic Party Convention, the election campaign of Walter Mondale and Geraldine Ferraro has offered us further enlightenment on capitalist politics.

Writing in *The Nation* on Oct. 6, Professors Thomas Ferguson and Joel Rogers, authors of the forthcoming "Right Turn: The 1984 Election and the Future of American Politics," ask plaintively in their article "Why Mondale Turned Right":

"Why, after some hopeful signs at the San Francisco convention, did the Democrats de-emphasize the issues of jobs, inequality, and nuclear war and choose the suicidal strategy of campaigning on a lowered deficit, increased taxes, and still higher military spending? And why, once it became obvious the strategy was not working, did Walter Mondale continue to pursue it?"

Their explanation is that when Edward Kennedy withdrew from the race and Mondale "stepped forward," the combination of a "turnaround" in the domestic economy, a worsening trade balance, and Reagan's "spectacular success in debilitating labor" had wrecked the "accord" between "labor leaders" and Democratic "business leaders."

Despite the revealing evidence they cite showing how the Democratic Party operates, the authors ascribe the "right turn" to a need to outflank Reagan in a period of "upturn."

Nonetheless, Ferguson and Rogers, who took their research from the Project for Investigative Reporting on Money and Politics, conclude that the Democratic Party missed "an opportunity opened on the left for a candidacy that offered fewer guns and more butter."

They blame the press. *The New York Times* is chided for quoting at length from the American Enterprise Institute cautioning against "any Democratic move to the left."

"Rock of Gibraltar"

Yet they show that "virtually all the Democratic business leaders favored further increases in the military budget."

The space missed "on the left" by Democratic Party candidates was, they tell us, one which "Jesse Jackson's campaign sometimes fought to fill."

But the authors also reveal that Jackson's campaign was "assisted by contributions from people—such as former U.S. Ambassador to Saudi Arabia, James Atkin—who have, perhaps not always championed the cause of the domestic poor and oppressed."

Professors Ferguson and Rogers also inform us that "leading investment bankers" were "overrepresented" among the major contributors to Democratic organizations, like "Democrats for the '80s."

They received "substantial funds" from partners and executives at Lehman Brothers Kuhn Loeb; Goldman, Sachs; Brown Brothers Harriman; Lazard Freres; and Prudential-Bache, to cite only a few. In fact, we learn, Prudential-Bache sank so much money "into Democratic organizations in the past couple of years" that the Democrats' real emblem was "the Rock of Gibraltar":

"A virtual first mortgage on the Mondale candidacy was taken out by investment bankers, insurance company executives, and other business elites for whom a cut in deficit and further increases in military spending constitute the

preferred political program. These essentially conservative groups now make up the elite corps of the Mondale campaign."

Flexible Schlesinger

Furthermore, the chief counselors on foreign policy to Walter Mondale turn out to be James Schlesinger and Max Kampelman, both of whom accompanied Walter Mondale for his briefings by the director of the National Security Council.

James Schlesinger is the consultant to the investment house of Shearson Lehman/American Express. His views on the deficit and on economics are identical to those of Ronald Reagan, whose campaign he once directed in 1976.

From the viewpoint of the ruling

class, the James Schlesinger story is composed of the right stuff. He was director of Strategic Studies at the Rand Corporation where he was a senior staff member advising John F. Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson from 1963 through 1969. He helped direct the Bureau of the Budget under Richard Nixon in 1969 and was Nixon's co-director of the Office of Management and Budget in 1971.

Schlesinger also served Richard Nixon as chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission from 1971 to 1973. Nixon resigned, but Schlesinger carried on—to become director of the Central Intelligence Agency in 1973 and secretary of defense from 1973 to 1975.

James Schlesinger, however, is a flexible man. He helped run Ronald Reagan's challenge to Gerald Ford's nomination in 1976 and, when Ford lost to Jimmy Carter—why James Schlesinger became a personal assistant to President Carter. Carter appointed him secretary of the Department of Energy where he served from 1977 to 1979.

While secretary of defense under Richard Nixon, Schlesinger was "more hawkish" than his boss. His advocacy of first-strike capability continued in 1980 when he became senior staff at the Center for Strategic and International Studies at Georgetown University. Here he divides his services between devising strategems of strategic nuclear superiority for Pentagon associates and his financial nostrums sought out by Shearson Lehman/American Express.

Versatile Kampelman

The Max Kampelman saga is even more stirring. Kampelman's relationship to Walter Mondale long antedates that of James Schlesinger. He counseled young Mondale when Mondale was a protege of Hubert Humphrey.

Kampelman was Lyndon Johnson's "adviser" to the U.S. Mission to the United Nations from 1966 to 1967 during the height of the air bombardment of Indochina. He served in the right-wing Atlantic Council of the United States from 1965 to 1970 and

was a founder of the "neoconservative" Committee on the Present Danger.

This committee grew into the Coalition for a Democratic Majority, of which Max Kampelman was vice chairman. This group advocated far-right policies for the Democratic Party. Kampelman re-established the Committee on the Present Danger to address the "communist menace."

His co-members comprise a who's who of the "neoconservatives" who campaigned for Ronald Reagan and are among his principle advisers.

These include Midge Decter, Norman Podhoretz, Leon Keyserling, Jean Kirkpatrick, and Richard Pipes. Richard Pipes is Ronald Reagan's chief adviser on the Soviet Union. Jean Kirkpatrick continues in Max Kampelman's footsteps at the United Nations.

This is not surprising. Kampelman and Kirkpatrick co-authored "The Strategy of Deception" in 1963, a polemic on the world communist conspiracy and the need to smash it.


A vaudeville act

Noting that Schlesinger and Kampelman were brought by Mondale to guide him in his briefing by the National Security Council director, Alexander Cockburn exclaims in *The Nation* on Sept. 29:

"Reagan claims that Nicaragua is exporting revolution to the rest of Central America and so does Mondale. Reagan says Nicaragua should be 'pressured' until it mends its ways, and so does Mondale. Reagan says that he will invade Nicaragua if it buys 28-year-old Soviet MIG-21s to protect itself, and so does Mondale. Reagan justifies the invasion of Grenada...and so does Mondale. Reagan says that he supports the policies of Duarte, and so does Mondale. Reagan blames the missile crisis in Europe on the Russians, and so does Mondale. Reagan is bad on the Middle East, and Mondale is worse. And finally, Mondale promises to raise taxes and cut social spending."

To be asked to choose between Reagan's "Kampelman and Schlesinger" or Mondale's "Schlesinger and Kampelman" reduces any notion of real alternatives to the vaudeville act these partners in crime connote.

Vote SWP



Mel Mason

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.

Nov. 3 conference called to defend NBIPP charter

By ZAKIYA SOMBURU

For at least a year, a split over program, tactics, and strategy has been developing within the National Black Independent Political Party (NBIPP). The failure of the majority of its leadership and adherents nationwide to break with capitalist politics—specifically the Democratic Party—and to implement the charter that resulted from its 1980 founding conference, has cost NBIPP hundreds of members and created significant opposition to those leaders.

The charter clearly points a path away from the Democratic Party, capitalism, imperialism, and reformism, and toward independent political activity in the interests of the Black masses and their domestic and international allies.

On Sept. 29, a California State Conference was convened in Sacramento by members who are and have been actively working to implement the NBIPP charter. Its main purpose was to unify California activists and coordinate their participation in a National NBIPP conference to defend and implement the founding charter. The national conference is set for the weekend of Nov. 3 at Morgan State University in Baltimore, Md.

A newsletter of the Manhattan, N. Y.

chapter of NBIPP was distributed. It featured a front page article titled "Now is the time for a national Black independent political party" by Ken Morgan, co-chair of the Baltimore chapter of NBIPP.

In it he stated, "History has shown us that we cannot rely on the Demo-

cratic or Republican parties in our fight for liberation... Our challenge is to build an independent Black political movement—led by a Black party that will fight for Black interests, not those of the capitalist system responsible for our oppression."

For further information on the National Conference, NBIPP, or local contacts, call (301) 444-3454; or write NBIPP, P.O. Box 244, Baltimore, Md. 21203



Duarte meets with FMLN/FDR; Civil war continues

By LARRY COOPERMAN

The civil war in El Salvador has heated up in the aftermath of the first set of negotiations between the Duarte regime and the FMLN/FDR. Immediately following the conclusion of the negotiations, the Salvadoran army began a sweep of rebel-held territory in the northeastern part of the country. The FMLN received advance notice of the operation and was able to avoid the government troops.

Four days after the conclusion of the talks, a CIA spy plane crashed into the Guazapa Volcano, killing all four CIA employees on board. The crash provided the first evidence of a direct CIA role in intelligence gathering in El Salvador. The circumstances of the crash also seem to indicate a CIA role in directing Salvadoran army operations.

According to Radio Venceremos, the plane had been directing a Salvadoran army offensive in Morazan province and was "downed."

U.S. government officials continue to insist that the plane had crashed into the side of a mountain far away from Morazan when it encountered stormy weather.

The Salvadoran revolutionaries countered the government military operations with their own show of strength. The day after the negotiations in La Palma ended, the FMLN paralyzed traffic throughout the eastern half of El Salvador. And the FMLN continued its diplomatic offensive through making public the 29 demands it had presented to the Salvadoran government at the Oct. 15 talks.

Their demands included the punishment of those responsible for the most notorious death squad killings; establishment of a minimum wage of \$4.80 per day for coffee and cotton plantation workers; a 10 percent increase in wage for commercial, bank, and industrial workers; an agrarian reform program; a reduction in the prices of basic foodstuffs, fuels, and power; the right of workers to strike; freedom for political prisoners; a reduction in interest rates for small farmers and businesses; the cessation of bombing of civilian areas; and the establishment of full civil liberties.

Roberto D'Aubuisson, the leader of the far-right



Jose Napoleon Duarte

ARENA party, vigorously denounced the negotiations. He warned that the negotiations were playing into the hands of the FMLN/FDR. By contrast, the Reagan administration adopted a posture of support to the negotiations, although privately, administration officials were expressing skepticism over whether the negotiations could offer any solution acceptable to the U.S. government. It has been the policy of the U.S. government to attempt to divide the FMLN/FDR as part of an overall strategy to win a military victory over the guerrilla movement.

Nevertheless, the negotiations allowed the Reagan re-election campaign the opportunity to allay fears that its policies would lead to a regional military confrontation in Central America in which American troops would be directly involved. Reagan was therefore careful to publicly support the negotiations.

The negotiations, in the last analysis, were the

product of the present political and military stalemate in El Salvador. The FMLN cannot defeat the right-wing government at the present time nor can the U.S.-backed regime root out the guerrillas from the liberated zones. Each side is obligated, therefore, to attempt to win support from layers of the population which, above all, desire an end to the fighting.

In this context, Duarte decided to drop his previous precondition for negotiations with the rebels—the purge of Villalobos, the leader of the Ejercito Revolucionario Popular [ERP—People's Revolutionary Army], from the FMLN—and proposed to begin negotiations without any prior conditions. The FMLN/FDR, which had already proposed negotiations without preconditions, accepted the offer. After several matters relating to the security of the FMLN representatives were settled, the negotiations were able to take place.

The FMLN/FDR used the talks to put forward 29 demands which they considered preconditions to the establishment of peace in El Salvador. These 29 demands, which deal with the most urgent necessities of the Salvadoran population—civil liberties, land reform, raising wages, and bringing to justice those responsible for the death squads—is designed to clearly explain to the Salvadoran masses the social stakes in the conflict. The demands can appeal to the urban masses who seek not only an end to the war, but also a solution to their daily problems.

Duarte—who was accompanied by General Vides Casanova, the commander of El Salvador's hated National Guard—proposed once again that, if the guerrillas lay down their arms, they would be given amnesty and allowed to participate in El Salvador's elections. The FMLN/FDR once again rejected that proposal.

The only actual result of the Oct. 15 talks between Duarte and the FMLN/FDR was an agreement to set up a peace commission which would meet again sometime in late November. For the time being, the civil war continues. The conditions which provoked the civil war still exist: poverty, hunger, unemployment, inequality, and a government which defends the privileged few. ■

Plays, pills, tribunals dramatize growing antiwar sentiment

By NANCY GRUBER

The U.S. government is indicted for crimes against humanity! Students petition university to stock post-atomic attack "suicide pills"! One hundred productions of new anti-nuclear-weapons plays are mounted across the country! The month of October has seen an upsurge in dramatic responses to the increasingly widespread fear of nuclear war and revulsion at the U.S. war-mongering that continually multiplies the risks of war.

In San Francisco, on Oct. 14, a Citizen's Tribunal on Central America was held in which the people of the United States appeared as plaintiffs. Named as defendants in the indictment were Ronald Reagan, CIA Director William Casey, Secretary of State George P. Shultz, and other officials of the Reagan administration.

The tribunal, one of a dozen held in New York, Atlanta, and other cities throughout the United States during October, cited as precedents the Nuremberg Tribunal of 1946, at which Nazi leaders were tried, and the 1966-67 Bertrand Russell Tribunal on War Crimes in Vietnam.

The current tribunals are modeled on the grand jury. The nine San Francisco jurors included judges; a Stanford University professor of international law; labor and church officials; and Daniel Ellsberg, the former State Department official who disclosed U.S. government activities in the "Pentagon Papers."

The indictment, read by the prosecutor, immigration attorney Marc Van Der Hout, included seven specific violations

of international and domestic law. The U.S. government officials were charged with "the threat and use of force against the territorial integrity and political independence of Nicaragua" and "aiding and abetting the commission of crimes against humanity..." in both Nicaragua and El Salvador. Other counts included the introduction of U.S. armed forces into Central America without the permission of Congress and inhuman treatment of refugees.

Testimony, often moving and at times horrifying, was offered by numerous witnesses. A 23-year-old Salvadoran refugee graphically described how eight of his friends were dragged from the classroom and brutally murdered. A Salvadoran doctor who worked in a clinic for refugees reported the incursion by the Death Squads even into the operating and recovery rooms to accomplish their deadly missions. Ricardo Calderon, for



four years chancellor of the University of El Salvador, recounted his own imprisonment and torture.

Among the witnesses were representatives of the Sanctuary movement, today's "underground railroad" for Salvadoran refugees, and of Witness for Peace, an organization which sends observers to live on the Nicaraguan-Honduras border. A former CIA agent, medical observers, a political secretary

at the Nicaraguan embassy, and many others also testified to first-hand experiences with U.S. intervention in the area.

In reporting out the indictment, California Supreme Court Justice Frank Newman, the foreman of the jury, stressed that the evidence against the defendants was conclusive. He urged further investigation stating that "although we were an investigating body rather than judicial, there is sufficient evidence to support further inquiry by congressional and judicial hearings and the Government Accounting Office."

"Handy Dandy"

A more imaginary—but hardly more theatrical—courtroom drama was also being performed all across the United States. "Handy Dandy, a comedy but..." by William Gibson, author of "The Miracle Worker," and "Two for the Seesaw," received 10 performances in New York, 14 in Los Angeles, and dozens of amateur productions from Kansas to Oregon over the weekend of Oct. 13-14.

The readings, sponsored by the Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign, boasted a roster of star performers that included Burt Lancaster, Richard Dreyfuss, Julie Harris, Gena Rowlands, Jane Alexander, Geraldine Fitzgerald, E.G. Marshall, and many others.

The play explores the theme of civil disobedience through the relationship of a 72-year-old nun and the district court judge who must sentence her to prison for her part in a nuclear weapons protest. Gibson has rejected a Broadway production for "Handy Dandy," telling

the *New York Times*: "I want this particular play to have a life out in the country. It only takes two chairs and a broom to stage, so groups can mount it in churches."

A drama of another kind was played out at Brown University on Oct. 11-12. By a 2-to-1 vote, undergraduates passed a referendum urging the university health service to stockpile "suicide pills" for use in case of nuclear war. The student organizers of the measure were undisturbed by the university administration's refusal to obey the referendum, which they regard as largely symbolic.

Jason Salzman and Christopher Ferguson, the organizers, maintain that they do not condone suicide, though they believe that it is a realistic alternative in the event of nuclear war. Their real aim is to dramatize the suicidal nature of the arms race. "There are words we hear talk about when people mention nuclear war: survival, recovery," says Salzman. "I like more appropriate words: suicide, death" (*New York Times*, Oct. 11).

Salzman and Ferguson are organizing a movement called "Students Against Nuclear Suicide," which is planning a rally at Brown on Nov. 2. They express the hope that the initiative will be picked up on other campuses, and that rallies will be widely held on that day.

The Brown referendum, the Tribunals, and the Gibson drama, clearly represent an effort to use new and creative tactics to organize an effective opposition to the U.S. government's bellicosity. The impact of tactics such as these can be multiplied over and over by such means as the televising of the Tribunals (as was done in San Francisco) and the performing of the play in thousands of towns and villages. Taken together these three October events clearly reflect the desire of large numbers of people to challenge the U.S. pro-war policies. ■

FMLN/FDR—Duarte talks: What are the stakes?

By RALPH SCHOENMAN

The pressure for a negotiated settlement to the war in El Salvador had been mounting long before the Duarte regime and the Salvadoran FDR/FMLN agreed to meet on Oct. 15 in La Palma. It was not only the Contadora powers of Colombia, Venezuela, Panama, and Mexico—those citadels of “anti-imperialist” politics—which have urged peace talks upon the revolutionary movement of El Salvador.

Both the Cuban government and the revolutionists in power in Nicaragua have urged these talks. And the Salvadoran revolutionary movement has called for them unconditionally.

Democratic Party candidates, Walter Mondale and Geraldine Ferraro, who have baited Reagan for failing to take indiscriminate reprisals after the recent bombing in Beirut, have also berated him for being “late” in inaugurating negotiations in El Salvador.

“By any means necessary”

“Peace” negotiations have never been a problem for the ruling class, whether they are seeking “labor peace” at home or the “peace” to halt social change abroad. This is why the current talks between Duarte and the FMLN are claimed by Reagan as the real fruit and purpose of his policy—even as Mondale scrambles, intoning that they were his idea all along. Both are correct.

Richard Stone was dispatched by Reagan to negotiate with the FMLN over a year ago, and the Contadora powers, among the most repressive regimes on the continent—no matter their facade—have been a transmission belt for the Reagan administration. Secretary of State George Shultz himself has met directly with Sandinista leaders.

The purpose of negotiations from the point of view of the ruling class is to ratify the preservation of bourgeois power. If the ruling class believes it can gain the initiative, ensnare the resistance, stabilize the ruling order, or draw breath before the assault to come, it will never hesitate.

The ruling class are masters at applying for their own ends the maxim of Malcolm X: “By any means necessary.”

Class issues

Revolutionaries, too, can use negotiations. The critical issue, whether in San Salvador or Detroit, is to what end? If the purpose is to secure a forum from which to articulate the class aims of the struggle, if the masses are prepared to rally around programmatic demands which strip away bourgeois legitimacy, the struggle will advance.

If, on the contrary, the talks serve to confer legitimacy upon the class enemy, if the populace is either deluded or demobilized, then the struggle will suffer.

In the United States there are those who urge the antiwar movement to organize around the classic liberal demand of “dump Reagan” in order to advance peace negotiations in El Salvador. Now, if these negotiations are conceived as the class correlative of choosing Mondale over Reagan, then the “selection” of Duarte over D’Aubuisson will strike a blow at the self-organization of the masses. They are the real issues. They are issues of class, now as they always have been.

In 1960 John Kennedy called for the removal of the “Cuban cancer” from the hemisphere, while Richard Nixon advocated “statesmanship and moderation.”

At the time, Nixon was presiding over the plans for the Bay of Pigs invasion, which Kennedy would later carry

out. In 1980 it was Reagan, like Nixon, who was for “moderation,” while Carter, like Kennedy, made the case for intervention.

What is illustrated here is not only the classic policeman’s gambit of hard-cop/soft-cop, but, like Mutt and Jeff, the interchangeability of roles, which is the defining interaction of the two parties that make up the One Big Property Party in America.



Training of militias by FMLN rebels in Usulután.

Michel Setboun

The negotiations that took place during the Vietnam War had one essential feature that tends to be a consistent pattern in the reponse of the ruling class to a revolutionary challenge. The critical issue was to retain at all costs the armed apparatus of the old order while applying the maximum pressure in the field to secure a halt to the struggle of the mass movement. Even a temporary lull is essential, for the basic purpose is to start, by whatever ploy, a process of demobilization in the mass movement.

It is the separation of resistance leaders from their mass base that constitutes the stuff of ruling-class tactics in talks—whether over strikes or armed struggle.

For this reason, negotiations with the class enemy when the issue of power is on the agenda has invariably been accompanied by an even greater use of force. Some of the worst bombings in Indochina took place on the eve of—and at critical moments during—the negotiations in Paris. Indeed, as

Richard Nixon was being toasted by Chairman Mao in Peking, the bombs kept falling on Haiphong.

A key issue during the Indochinese negotiations was the composition of the regime in Saigon—with the language of compromise translated to mean some form of amalgam between the regime in Saigon and the representatives of the National Liberation Front.

There was even a tentative agreement

discussed in Moscow based upon the removal of South Vietnamese Chief of State Nguyen Van Thieu, but the retention of Nguyen Cao Ky, Thieu’s second in command. But to accomplish this, there had to be the implicit or explicit agreement that the guerrillas would suspend the struggle.

No question of power

Jose Napoleon Duarte, in an interview in the November issue of *Playboy*, stated his attitude toward “dialogue.”

“I say O.K. But what for? . . . Are they [the guerrillas] ready to say, ‘Never again will I pick up a rifle to kill people?’ Will the guerrillas in the mountains pay attention to their civilian leaders when they are told to disarm?”

Later, when pressed by the *Playboy* reporter as to what these negotiations would be designed to achieve, Duarte was explicit: “I propose a sincere dialogue in which the question of power is not on the agenda, with no guns on the

table.”

The *Playboy* reporter also asked Duarte if the armed forces were “sincere in their desire for peace,” to which Duarte replied, “I’m sure of it.”

Within three days of the meeting in La Palma, however, the Salvadoran army launched a massive surprise offensive. “The war goes on,” said Lt. Col. Domingo Monterrosa, army commander of the eastern third of the country, as his troops moved into rebel-held Morazan Province here today. “There are times when you have to make war to gain peace” (*New York Times*, Oct. 19, 1984).

The *New York Times* article is instructive in other ways. Army Commander Monterrosa told the *Times* that the objective of the attack was “to try to capture guerrilla commanders who may have traveled here from La Palma to discuss rebel strategy.”

Col. Adolfo Blandon also told the *Times* that this was the opening assault of a “six-month army offensive intended to keep the guerrillas on the run,” while Col. Monterrosa spoke of the “fall in rebel strength.”

There is a clear relationship between the strategy openly declared by Duarte and the statements of his commanders in the field. The negotiations, they all agree, are designed to help break the back of the resistance. They too agree with the maxim: “by any means necessary.”

Dumping of Mondale

Of course, the timing of the talks in La Palma is of more than passing interest. Ironically, many who have favored “dumping Reagan” have advocated support for negotiations on the grounds that the moderate posture of the U.S. antiwar movement would serve to bring into office a moderate spokesperson for the ruling class in America.

One charge against the ruling class will never be sustained—that of naivete. We have a nice paradox wherein it is Reagan who has promoted the talks in La Palma just weeks before the elections, thus facilitating the dumping of Mondale. Such are the wages of moderate sin.

The dangers, however, do not lie at the negotiating table as opposed to the battlefield. They lie, rather, in the incapacity of the revolutionary or antiwar movements to resist the shared strategy and pressures of *all* components of the besieged ruling class.

To avoid this danger, it is of critical importance to communicate to the masses of the population—those in El Salvador and in the United States—that there is no middle ground, no protracted dual power, no shared command at the heights of the state apparatus, no lying down with the fox and the hares, no temporizing with the apparatus of the oppressor state that will enhance survival—let alone ensure victory. ■

Polish ‘Inprekor’

Since the Polish *Inprekor* was first published in October 1981 twelve issues have appeared.

Inprekor is published every two months as a journal reflecting the point of view of the Fourth International. It addresses itself to the debates that are going on in the Polish workers movement.

Inprekor also reports on the mass struggles in other countries — Salvador, Turkey, Bolivia, Brazil, the anti-war movement in Europe — with particular attention to the activities of the democratic and workers opposition in the countries of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, as well as to solidarity with Solidarnosc activities. *Inprekor* also gives space to other political currents and to fraternal debate with them. There have been articles from Jacek Kuron, Adam Michnik, Josef Pinior, Wladyslaw Frasnyniuk, Zbigniew Romaszewski, Zbigniew Bujak and the organisation ‘Fighting Solidarnosc’.

To make sure that *Inprekor* can appear regularly, to increase its distribution in Poland, we need your help. You can take a supporters subscription, or simply make a donation as an act of international solidarity.

A subscription for one year (6 issues) is 75 French francs, 12 US dollars or £8 sterling. Make cheques payable to PEC (Polish *Inprekor*) and send to *Inprekor*, Polish edition, 2 rue Richard Lenoir, 93100 Montreuil, France. For bank transfers, etc. proceed as for *International Viewpoint*, but always with the addition ‘Polish *Inprekor*’.





British miners

Interview with strike leader:

Coal miners resist destruction of industry

Jim Robinson is Strike Coordinator for British miners in the South Nottingham area and works at the Cotgrave mine there. He was interviewed in San Francisco on Oct. 16, 1984, by Alan Benjamin and Nat Weinstein.

Socialist Action: Can you tell us about your tour of the United States?

Jim Robinson: Nottingham University, which sponsored our trip here, insisted that a woman, a young miner, and an older miner be on the tour, so that we could give people over here a picture of all aspects of the strike. As you can guess, I'm the older miner. We spoke at a number of places: Penn State University, Morgantown University, and in Charleston, W. Va.

S. A.: Did you speak before any union locals?

J. R.: Yes, I spoke to a steelworkers' local in Pittsburgh, Pa.—Ron Wiesen's local. They immediately identified the miners' struggle in England with their own particular struggle, because the steel industry has been decimated in America, as it has in England.

S. A.: Have you spoken to U.S. coal miners during your tour?

J. R.: We did visit one picket line in Kentucky—coal miners—and we told them about the strike in England. They were pleased to receive the information.

I'll let you into a little secret. Ian MacGregor, an American who runs the coal industry in England, is continually holding up the U.S. mining industry as an example. In England we're given the impression that the American coal miner never strikes. MacGregor doesn't tell people that he tried to smash the mineworkers in Harlan County, Ky., in 1974 and that he's using the same tactics in Great Britain today.

S. A.: What is the main idea that you are explaining on your tour?

J. R.: First of all we tell people that we're not on strike over pay, working conditions, or contract ratification, but to defend ourselves against the destruction of our industry. The present British government has no plans to build coal-fired power stations over the next 20 years, but they have a program to build 20 nuclear plants. The ultimate idea is to close the coal industry down because of the traditionally militant role that the National Union of Mineworkers has played in the trade-union movement in England.

S. A.: It was announced that 20,000 jobs will be lost to the mineworkers, and they say up to 70,000 could be lost. Is this the central question as miners see it today?

J. R.: Yes. In England, just as in the United States when the bosses run down the steel industry, the communities around that industry are destroyed. In

"Women are playing a role equal to the miners. Rallies of 20,000 women have shown their support."

America, though it's becoming less and less likely, a worker might have the opportunity to go elsewhere and get a job. When you're laid off in England, you're finished. There is nowhere else to go for a job.

We say invest in the pits and make them "economic" once again. The Thatcher government planned what they call a "planners' stockpile" to use against striking miners whenever they chose to pick an industrial fight with the workforce. They planned to stockpile the coal five years ago. Every winter old people are left to freeze to death. But we coal miners say, if we've got surplus coal, let's give it to the pensioners for nothing.

S. A.: Have the miners raised the idea of a shorter work week to answer the problem of layoffs caused by increased technology?

J. R.: We say that if you do mechanize mines and it requires fewer workers, then there should be fewer work days in these mines. That's definitely one of the top priorities. Mr. McGregor says he has offered

miners a certain amount of money to compensate laid-off workers. Why doesn't he bring the retirement age down and give us a decent pension at age 55? We want to advance benefits to *all* workers in industry—not just those selected few who get offered redundancy pay.

S. A.: It's obvious to many of us that Thatcher is trying to break the union movement by breaking the miners. What kind of solidarity has been expressed in England with the miners' strike? And what position did the recent Labor Party conference take on the miners' strike?

J. R.: As an act of support and solidarity, 99 percent of all train drivers do not move coal—even in Nottingham, which is the biggest scabbing area there is. The dockworkers refuse to handle imported coal.



They've had two dock strikes. And from day one some seamen have refused to handle ships that import coal.

There are two other important factors in maintaining this strike: the role of young people and the participation of women. I've never seen before rallies of 10,000 to 20,000 women showing their support. Women are playing a role equal to that of the miners in the strike.

As far as the Labor Party is concerned, it must come to terms with the fact that its grass roots have been supporting us from the start. The party membership has told the leaders: "You will announce our support."

Labor Party branches in every single town—even in Nottingham—have supported the miners throughout this strike and have insisted on supporting groups that collect food and money and build rallies.

S. A.: Is there coal from other countries going to Britain?

J. R.: I understand that there is—South African coal, American coal, Polish coal. England and America both have a policy of trade embargo against South Africa. Yet South Africa's coal industry is expanding at a far greater rate than any coal industry in the world. I say, "Practice what you preach!" American companies are investing in South African mines; British companies are investing in South African mines. What we're saying is: "Invest in the industry that is in your country rather than in the slave trade in South Africa."

In our strike center we received a letter from some Polish mine workers who apologized for the fact that Polish coal was being used to scab on British miners. They totally condemned the military regime in Poland for trying to break the miners' strike. In spite of the opposition of the Polish government, those workers also identify with our struggle.

Australia, on the other hand, will not allow the export of coal into Britain during the present miners' strike. That's another tremendous act of solidarity,

because Australia is one of the largest producers and exporters of coal.

S. A.: Has an injunction against picketing been utilized, and have the threats to use force to limit picketing been carried out?

J. R.: The police have been out hammering miners from the beginning. Up until two weeks ago, the figures released showed 6850 miners arrested on picket lines. Of those, 2500 required medical attention because of police brutality, and there were two deaths.

They didn't need the courts and their injunctions. All that the courts have done is to justify the brutality. The miners in England are of the opinion that no court is going to rule in the favor of anybody who is taking on the government and the bosses. We've had 15 different court decisions now, and they mean as much to the miners out on strike as the bribes that have been offered to them about returning to work.

When you've been hit a few times it doesn't take long to realize that the policeman has got backing. He's been told to do it. He's been equipped and trained to hammer the hell out of you. So he's got the law on his side. In court today in Britain, instead of reading your name out, they just call you by number. Supermarket justice.

S. A.: We understand that the union has been threatened with confiscation of their funds if it violates the injunction against picketing?

J. R.: That was always a threat. The president of our union, Arthur Scargill, answered them. He said, "If we have to work through a public telephone, so be it."

They can take our money, they can take our buildings, but we'll still be the National Union of Mineworkers, and we'll still have the support of the public in Great Britain.

They won't defeat us. When you take money from a businessman, tears immediately flood his eyes. When you take from a miner or any working person who believes in his struggle, he'll shed no tears as long as he's got a square meal for his family. They've already taken my money, so they can take the union's money, but they can't take away the organization of the National Union of Miners. That will always be there, because we support it 100 percent.

S. A.: The strike began seven months ago. Thatcher, MacGregor, and others thought that they could break the strike before winter. Do you think you have a pretty good chance now to make the government give in?

J. R.: There will be cuts after Christmas without a doubt. Thatcher said that coal is too expensive to burn. And yet they switched as many power stations as they could from coal to oil, and oil is twice as expensive as coal. So that throws their economic argument out the window. When the power cuts occur this winter, 130,000 miners and their supporters will be dancing in the streets. The cuts won't turn public support against us, because it's Thatcher who continually said that everything is under control. So the repercussions will reflect on her and her handling of the strike.

When the government forced this strike they forgot—as MacGregor did in the Harlan County, Ky., strike—that miners, whether they be in the United States or in the United Kingdom, can be very determined people. They've shown their determination by the hardship they've suffered.

S. A.: What can our readers do to help the strikers?

J. R.: One important thing is to send letters of support for the British miners to the national headquarters. Or, better yet, send them to individual strike centers—to the grass roots. Our local NUM Strike Center is located at 218 Mansfield Road, Nottingham, England. We have our own rank-and-file newsletter, the *Nott Striker*, and one section of it is set aside for solidarity work and support in England and abroad. If we receive letters from abroad we publish them, because it's a tremendous morale booster.

Donations can be sent as well. If checks are sent to my area, they must specifically say "Nott Central Strike Fund."

We have been encouraged by the national union to set up our own strike funds, because previously we had only appealed for money on a national level, and the courts are seizing that national money. ■

Ever since the Nicaraguan FSLN announced elections for Nov. 4, 1984, the U.S. government and its allies—the contras and the Nicaraguan Coordinating Committee (CDN) of Arturo Cruz—have sought to discredit, disrupt, and sabotage these elections.

Although the provisions announced last July 19 authorized all ten registered parties to fully participate in the elections, the CDN has refused to do so, arguing that the elections should be postponed to allow all the “democratic forces” more time and freedom to carry out their campaign.

The CDN demand that elections be postponed is not neutral. Its aim is to prevent the FSLN from obtaining the legitimacy that the first free elections in the history of Nicaragua would unquestionably bestow upon this revolutionary leadership. Its aim is to permit an ever greater U.S. intervention in Nicaragua after Reagan’s likely election on Nov. 6.

Under pressure from the United States, another party, the Independent Liberal

Party (PLI) of Virgilio Godoy, decided on Oct. 21 to pull out of the elections. The FSLN’s response was immediate. “It is completely impossible to change the election from Nov. 4,” said Bayardo Arce, one of the FSLN commanders. The move by the PLI, he said, “is not going to affect the revolutionary process.”

All the enemies of the Nicaraguan revolution are determined to undermine the Nov. 4 elections. But the FSLN has stood up to the pressures. It has exposed the undemocratic nature of the CDN and its alliance with the contras, and has set out to defend the gains of the revolution at the polling place.

This issue of *Forum* is devoted to the Nicaraguan elections. Dianne Feeley and Margaret Mora, two members of Socialist Action, have recently returned from Nicaragua and have filed this special report for our readers. More than ever, the Nicaraguan people require the solidarity of working people in this country and around the world. This *Forum* is part of our contribution to this end.—THE EDITORS.

By DIANNE FEELEY

MANAGUA, Nicaragua—On Nov. 4 the Nicaraguan people will carry out their first free elections. They will do so despite a CIA-funded war that is raging on their borders and despite Washington’s vicious economic stranglehold.

Since 1981 military attacks alone have cost Nicaragua more than \$200 million and the loss of more than 7000 civilian and military lives. The *contras* specifically target health-care workers and other technicians on the theory that such a policy can bleed the country of its precious human resources.

Despite these difficulties, the Sandinista government committed itself to organizing elections this year. Voters will elect a president, vice president, and a 90-member national assembly. One of the assembly’s chief responsibilities will be the drafting of a new constitution.

The government has spent several months in preparing the legislation under which truly free voting can occur. A number of important amendments were incorporated into the electoral law after the debate in the Council of State.

An infrastructure capable of efficiently organizing the voter registration and election process has been constructed. Thirty million dollars have been earmarked for financing the elections, a sum equal to approximately 40 percent of the country’s annual health budget. While U.S. officials flippantly call the elections “phoney,” the fact that these material resources have been mobilized for the elections indicates the seriousness with which the Sandinistas have undertaken this project.

In 1979 the Sandinista government guaranteed that free elections would be held as soon as conditions permitted. The implementation of the alphabetization campaign—through which illiteracy was reduced from 50 percent to 12 percent—had been seen as one of the preconditions for democratic elections. Viewed in the same way was the process of building the mass organizations, including the women’s federation, the trade unions, the Sandinista youth, and the block associations.

By learning how to make decisions, carrying out campaigns and then evaluating them, many Nicaraguans obtained the practical experience they needed to begin to take control over their own lives. Today Nicaragua is alive with political discussion.

The four-day voter registration drive, conducted last summer, was the government’s first test of organizing the electoral process. Nearly 1.6 million Nicaraguans, or an estimated 93.7 percent of the eligible population, turned out, surpassing the anticipated goal.

Abstention and postponement

The right-wing opposition coalition, however, laid down a series of demands last Dec. 23 where it outlined the basis upon which it would participate in the electoral process. These have been

Nicaragua votes in the midst of war



Three high school students who volunteered for one year of militia duty against CIA-supported contras in the northern part of Nicaragua. Scene from David Bradbury’s new documentary film, “Nicaragua: No Pasaran.” See film review page 9.

endorsed by Dr. Arturo Cruz, who returned from Washington, D.C., in July.

Cruz, a former member of the Sandinista junta, is the presidential candidate for the Nicaraguan Coordinating Committee (CDN), which is composed of the Social Christian Party, the Social Democratic Party, the Constitutional Liberal Party, and a dissident faction of the Conservative Party. The nine demands constitute a political platform for derailing the Sandinista revolution, for a return to Somocismo without Somoza.

Point no. 9 calls for a “national dialogue” with all political parties and movements, including the “armed rebels.”

In April, the Catholic Bishops Conference issued its pastoral letter, which echoed a demand for a dialogue with the *contras*. Although it was issued right at the height of the U.S. mining of the harbors, it did not mention the mining or other acts of aggression. Nor did it note the government’s amnesty decree.

In evaluating the demand of the CDN in their monthly bulletin, *Envio*,

the Historical Institute of Central America concluded:

“The Democratic Coordinating Committee’s decision to take on what is considered an unpopular cause in Nicaragua—the reintegration of Somoza’s ex-National Guard—is widely interpreted as a result of that sector’s absolute dependency on U.S. strategies, the foremost of which is the strategy of military aggression.

“Considering that the National Guard represented the very backbone of the Somoza dictatorship, it is absurd to suggest that a ‘return to democracy’ implies a return to the essence of the dictatorship. On laying down their conditions for taking part in the elections, the right-wing political parties did little more than repeat the message of former U.S. Special Envoy Richard Stone, that the participation of the counterrevolutionaries in the elections is necessary. Henry Kissinger expressed this position in Mexico two weeks before COSEP [Higher Council of Private Enterprise] and the Demo-

cratic Coordinating Committee published their statement.”

Manufactured preconditions

The other CDN preconditions include: (1) separation of party and state; (2) abrogation of laws violating human rights; (3) suspension of the State of Emergency; (4) enactment of an amnesty law; (5) respect for freedom of religion; (6) freedom to unionize; (7) autonomy of the judicial system; and (8) legal guarantee of civil rights.

Several of these points were manufactured for international consumption and have little to do with the reality of life in Nicaragua today. Nicaragua has an excellent human rights record, respects freedom of religion and the right to organize into unions of one’s choice, and guarantees civil rights. However, the right wing characterizes the Nicaraguan draft law and laws confiscating the property of private owners who decapitalize and allow their lands to lie idle as “violations” of human rights!

Nicaragua’s judicial system, although barely five years old, is independent. In

(continued on page 8)

...Nicaragua votes

(continued from page 7)

fact, a case against the government in Nicaragua's highest court has a greater chance of winning than a similar one brought in the U.S. Supreme Court.

Since its original passage in March 1982, the State of Emergency Law has been denounced by the right wing as proof of political repression. Yet the demand to repeal seems hollow from parties like the Social Christians and Social Democrats, who observed with admiration the March and May 1984 elections in El Salvador. There the state of siege was lifted for only 24 hours.

On July 19, 1984, the Sandinista government lifted most of the restrictions imposed under the State of Emergency legislation. This included freedom of travel, freedom to hold demonstrations and rallies, the right to strike, and freedom of the press—with the exception of information affecting national security.

Most observers expected that there would be a partial lifting of the law in the non-combat areas of the country, but instead the government lifted most of its restrictions. Still in effect is the suspension of rights of a citizen under arrest, but only in regard to crimes against public security, treason, espionage and terrorism—hardly unreasonable for a country that must fight a war on its borders.

It is important to note that before the nine points were published, the Nicaraguan government had already declared total amnesty for the more than 300 Miskitos imprisoned for counterrevolutionary activity. They offered amnesty with guarantees for the repatriation of all Nicaraguans who left the country after July 1979—even if they had joined the ranks of the counterrevolution.

The amnesty only excluded those in leadership positions, although even here the Sandinistas extended an invitation to Brooklyn Rivera, a leader of the Miskitos, to return. The amnesty has since been extended until the Nov. 4 elections. (Rivera has returned to Nicaragua for a two-week trip, which includes talks with Sandinista leaders, according to the Oct. 21 *New York Times*.)

Strategy of right wing

The demand for the separation of party and state is primarily aimed at crippling the mass organizations. For instance, the right wing objects to the fact that the CDS's, the neighborhood committees, have the power to issue ration cards and ensure that stores do not hoard or sell the rationed goods at higher prices.

That is, the right wing does not want the mass organizations to have such power. Rather they want to reserve that power for use by the state and its agencies. Yet this goes in exactly the opposite direction from the one dictated by the needs of ordinary people, who need to administer their own lives.



Cover of the CIA's manual for contras seeking to overthrow Sandinista government in Nicaragua. Graphic depicts rows of heads with bullets through each one. The guide endorses murder of government officials.

These demands constitute a political program on which the right wing might construct an election platform. However the CDN has chosen to abstain from the elections, using these preconditions as a fig leaf to cover their motives.

To most Nicaraguans, Arturo Cruz is not the "peacemaker" he is made out to be in the international press, but a close ally of the *contras*. In fact, both Robelo (ARDE) and Calero (FDN) have publicly stated their support for Cruz's candidacy.

The failure of the CDN to register before the Aug. 6 deadline makes it clear that these nine demands and the campaign being waged around them is

"Today Nicaragua is alive with political discussion."

designed to undermine Nicaragua's entire electoral process. And it is within this context that one can understand the angry reception Cruz receives when he shows up to speak.

During the latter part of September, Cruz met with supporters in Masaya, Leon, and Boaco. Thousands protested outside these meetings and in all three



Daniel Ortega announces elections for Nov. 4. Ortega is FSLN presidential candidate. Roberta Lichtman/Vision Fotos

instances the police had to be called in to protect the CDN supporters. *La Prensa* denounced the protesters as "turbulent ones," a name by which many young Nicaraguans identify themselves at demonstrations.

When the parties that comprise the CDN failed to register their candidate, they lost their legal standing as political parties, reverting, under the law, to being political organizations. In the National Council of Political Parties on Sept. 21, the FSLN representatives proposed that these parties have their status restored and the candidate registration period be reopened. Two days later the Supreme Electoral Council approved the measure and reopened the registration until Oct. 30—less than a week before the actual voting.

Campaign against elections

However the CDN is now calling for a postponement of the Nov. 4 date. This call has been taken up by the U.S. government as well as by representatives of the Socialist International. Willy Brandt, president of the Socialist International, met with FSLN representatives this fall, once in Rio de Janeiro and once in Managua.

The Sandinista government, for its part, has been willing to enter into negotiations with Cruz, who they believe has the authority to negotiate for ARDE and the FDN, the groups comprising the *contras*. According to an FSLN spokesperson at Columbia University on Oct.

19, the government was willing to postpone the elections if Cruz could arrange a ceasefire with the *contras*. This was worked out at the Rio de Janeiro meeting in September, but then Cruz did not meet the conditions of the agreement.

The campaign to delegitimize the Nov. 4 elections has not succeeded in derailing them. As Dora Maria Tellez, FSLN candidate for the National Assembly from Managua, noted, the right wing is "trying to buy time to accumulate a strength they have been unable to attain throughout the course of history."

The right-wing parties are unwilling to contest with the FSLN for political leadership of the government. Since the opening of the discussion on the electoral process, they have opposed the right of those in the militia to vote and opposed setting the voting age at 16.

The youth of the country played a decisive role in the literacy campaign and are today defending the country against aggression. For the right wing, this is proof that the youth should not be franchised. By taking these positions, the right wing has demonstrated its hostility to the profoundly democratic processes of the revolution.

On the other hand, the FSLN has fought to utilize the elections as a weapon to defend the gains of the revolution, to consolidate those gains by engaging in a debate that will clarify the direction in which the revolution is proceeding, and to place the revolution in the most defensible position possible as the U.S. war drive continues unabated.

The FSLN campaign is mobilizing more than 50,000 supporters to cover every house during the election campaign. They will listen to the complaints and suggestions of voters, explain the FSLN program and urge people to vote for the Sandinistas.

They will place the elections within the context of defending the country against aggression, and explain the importance of casting a ballot against the attempts to abstain. And during the last days of the campaign, most observers anticipate another pastoral letter may be issued by the Catholic hierarchy, calling on the faithful to abstain in the elections.

Election preparations

Although there are seven parties that will be participating in the Nov. 4 elections, most of the international attention has been focused on the abstentionist tactics of the CDN. The Supreme Electoral Council has organized training workshops in which more than 30,000 people have been trained in the mechanics of voter registration, voter counting, and reporting.

Two representatives from the Swedish Electoral Association, Jan Hult and Bert Carlsson, visited Nicaragua twice, attending some of the regional training workshops and reviewing all the election materials that will be used in the voting. Hult stated, after visiting a training session, "in the area of training and education, a great deal can be learned from Nicaragua."

Sweden is providing \$450,000 in paper supplies for the election, while Norway has promised \$800,000, and Finland is donating \$450,000 in paper, ink, and electric calculators.

International representatives will be present in Nicaragua to observe the electoral process. The electoral law has provided each political party with 9 million cordobas (28 cordobas equals \$1 U.S.) and the right to seek donations, as well as equal-time provisions on the state and privately owned radio and TV stations. Public rallies and debates and political billboards as well as painted political slogans indicate that the country is engaged in a vast political discussion over which way forward for the revolution.

There is no doubt in anyone's mind that the Sandinistas will capture between 70 and 80 percent of the vote. The big questions are the following: How many voters will abstain; will the Catholic bishops intervene in the elections calling for abstention, and what impact will that have on the elections; and will the U.S. government respect the will of the Nicaraguan people?

For its part, the FSLN points to the role the United States has played in overturning revolutionary possibilities in Latin America. This includes the 1926-34 period in Nicaragua, which led to the Somoza family's dictatorship over the next 40 years. It also includes Guatemala in 1954, the Dominican Republic in 1965, and Chile in 1973.

"The electoral law provides each party with 9 million cordobas as well as equal time on radio and TV."

war is draining the country's resources, but that given the situation, people must be prepared to defend the country against aggression. This means continuing to put up with inflation and scarcity. In fact, a certain belt-tightening is necessary, both for the war and also to provide more aid in the Miskito areas of the northeast and areas of the north that have suffered war damage.

Thousands have been forced to abandon their towns and lands, and providing for these people has been a government priority. Failure to allocate the money in this way would, of course, result in handicapping the revolution.

The FSLN recognizes that its program for economic development is on hold as the country must throw all its meager forces into defending itself against U.S. aggression. The Sandinista government has sought to decentralize the country in order to make each area fairly self-sufficient, attempting to minimize transportation difficulties and enabling the country to survive, even with a massive invasion. The FSLN does not promise better living conditions over this next period, but commits itself to leading a fight against those who would attempt to sell Nicaragua once again to the United States. ■

By PAUL SIEGEL

"Nicaragua: No Pasaran." A New Yorker Film release. Produced and directed by David Bradbury.

"Nicaragua: No Pasaran" is a powerful documentary made by David Bradbury, the Australian film maker who directed "Frontline," the award-winning film about Vietnam. It is being released early in November at the Film Forum in New York and in San Francisco, Boston, and other cities.

The film focuses on the Sandinista leader Tomas Borge, the only surviving

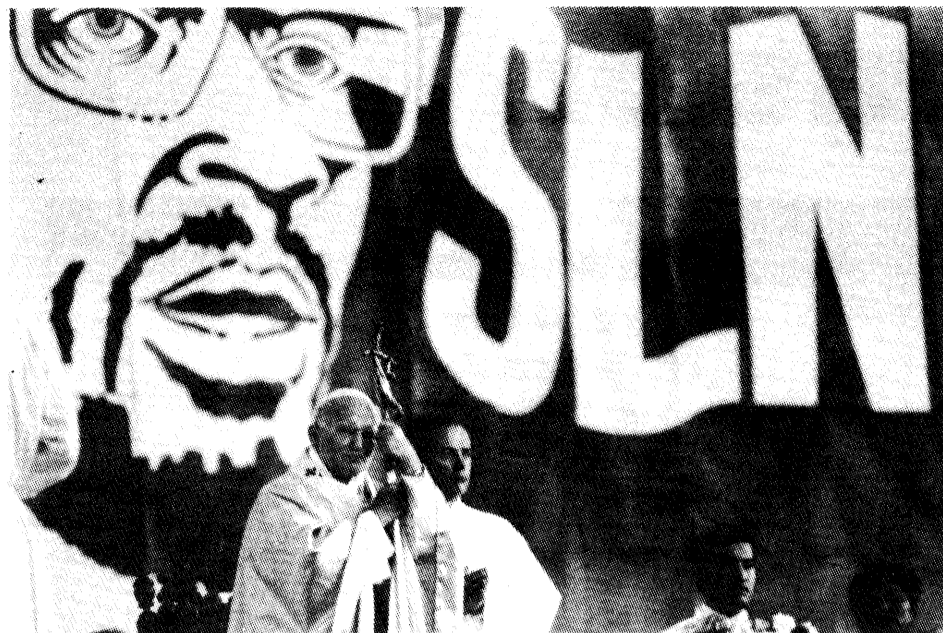
FILM REVIEW

founding member of the movement, as the representative of the revolution. In his interviews with Bradbury there is projected the character of a man of great inner strength, hardened by all he has endured in the struggle against the Somoza dictatorship, but also a man of humanity and humor.

Borge, in the political underground for 19 years, spent six of those years in prison, much of the time in solitary confinement. His wife was tortured, raped, and murdered by the National Guard, and he himself was tortured in an effort to cause him to reveal the information he had. He did not do so. He was finally rescued when the Sandinistas in a sensational operation captured the parliament and negotiated his and other political prisoners' release in exchange for the release of the deputies.

Bradbury shows Borge not only in

A powerful portrait of Tomas Borge



Pope John Paul II during his visit to Nicaragua in March 1983. Scene from "Nicaragua: No Pasaran."

interviews but mingling with crowds of ordinary people, with whom he exchanges solemn embraces. This is not the phoney heartiness, the smiles, waves, and glad-handing of American politicians "working" the crowd. We perceive the respect and affection of a people with whom Borge is united in a grim determination to stand up to the colossus which is threatening to crush them.

Bradbury effectively uses cuts from a film of Reagan addressing Congress on the "threat" from this country of 2.5

million. He charges Nicaragua with seeking to "destabilize our hemisphere."

But we see the young men and young women of the militia learning to use their rifles against the contras who, organized, financed, and trained by the CIA, have struck cruel blows against the country.

Reagan asserts that the Sandinista government is "even worse than its predecessor," whose reliance on the support of American imperialism was shown earlier in the film.

We also see Reagan stating that the Sandinista government "insulted and mocked the Pope."

In a highly dramatic sequence we then see what actually happened.

The Pope's visit

A huge crowd came to hear the Pope at an emotionally charged moment. Two days before, 17 young members of the militia, some of them asleep, had been killed in a surprise attack by the contras.

The crowd was deeply stirred by this event and expected the Pope to say a prayer for the souls of the slain, who had died without the confession and absolution that is so important for devout Catholics. It also hoped that he would say something critical of the war being waged against the country.

Instead, the Pope spoke about the need of upholding the authority of the hierarchy, which is in opposition to the government and to the "People's Church" of priests, nuns, and laymen who support the revolution. After the crowd stood listening to this for a long time in the hot sun, a spontaneous cry welled up from it that became a chant: "We want peace."

This was the "insult" of which Reagan spoke: a call for the Pope, who allegedly represents one whom the Church refers to as the Prince of Peace, to speak up for peace.

The film ends with Reagan saying, "There is no thought of sending American combat troops to Central America."

We then see once more the American military preparations in Honduras. The contrast between Reagan's words and his actions is ominous.

The Nicaraguan press today

By MARGARET MORA

MANAGUA, Nicaragua—During our two-week stay in Nicaragua we visited the three major newspapers: *La Prensa*, *Barricada*, and *El Nuevo Diario*.

La Prensa has historically been a conservative newspaper. Its anti-Somoza position was in reality a pro-capitalist position. In 1977 when the Sandinistas began to win more influence, Pedro Joaquin Chamorro, the editor of *La Prensa* went to the United States to seek support for his views.

When Somoza heard of Chamorro's U.S. visit, he had Chamorro murdered. Since 1978 *La Prensa* has become an anti-Somoza newspaper—but not a pro-Sandinista one.

Barricada is the official newspaper of the Frente Sandinista, not of the Nicaraguan state. Before the revolution, the Sandinistas had an idea of what kind of paper they wanted to have. They wanted a newspaper that would be creative and would reflect positions critical of the FSLN. At *Barricada*, they think this is healthy.

At one point, *La Prensa* began to have internal conflicts. Its editorial policy was moving further to the right. This led to the development of a newspaper that offered a third viewpoint, *El Nuevo Diario*.

El Nuevo Diario covers stories that *Barricada* as a "party paper" does not touch. For example, *Barricada* does not print articles about religion because this is not a political question. It is seen as a philosophical question and a personal matter.

On the question of censorship, the *Barricada* staff told us that they never wanted anything that resembled censorship in Nicaragua because they knew the type of image this would project.

So what happened? Why had the FSLN resorted to censorship in the case of *La Prensa*? According to the *Barricada* editor we spoke with, *La Prensa* had stopped being a vehicle for discussion and was transformed into a propaganda tool against the revolution.

The editor pointed out that the Chilean newspaper *El Mercurio* had played a role in the destabilization of Salvador Allende's government, and that a simi-

lar thing had happened in Jamaica with Michael Manley. There was one of two things to do: (1) explain internationally why certain things were being censored, or (2) explain, as exiles, why the revolution had been destroyed.

We were told that one of the censored articles was titled, "Why there has been an increase in venereal disease among the women of the Sandinista Youth."

This article, which was to appear in *La Prensa*, had stated that the women of the Sandinista youth organization were having sexual relations with members of foreign solidarity delegations. Another censored article had claimed that there was going to be no milk available in Managua the following day.

It was explained to us that there is no

abstract idea of freedom of the press in Nicaragua. Articles like the one claiming that there would be no milk available would have generated a panic.

The *Barricada* editor with whom we spoke told us that the steps against *La Prensa* were taken despite the desire to respect the richness of journalism. He also mentioned that on July 19 of this year, the censorship was lifted. The only items censored today are those containing unconfirmed military information.

At *Barricada*, they feel that a newspaper must play a critical role in relation to the revolution. We were told that to criticize the revolution is to make sure that the revolution will develop further. Then he pointed out the critical approach most favored at *Barricada*—cartoons!

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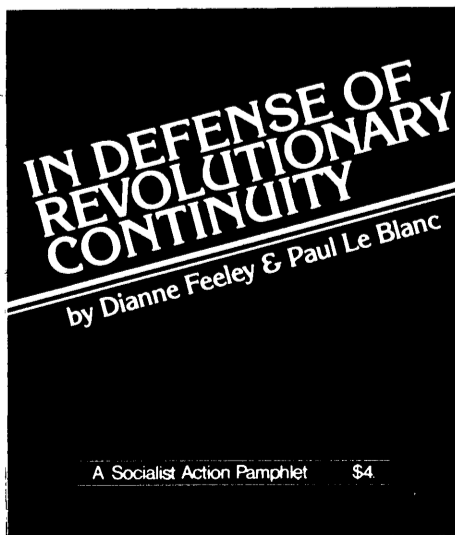
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Cuba prepares for U.S. invasion

By NAT WEINSTEIN

The Oct. 8 *New York Times* reported on the very extensive preparations being made in Cuba against the threat of a U.S. invasion. The front-page article by Joseph B. Treaster outlines the "large-scale evacuation and combat drills" and widespread construction of bomb shelters. Through a series of interviews with government officials and passers-by, Treaster shows that there is a deep and widespread belief among the Cuban people that the danger of a U.S. invasion is very real.

The *Times* article attempts to analyze what might lie behind the "dramatic increase in Cuba's defense measures."

Foreign diplomats in Havana are reported to sense that "Cuba is now sincerely convinced that an attack is in the offing."

Treaster notes the standard denial by a State Department spokesman of any intention to invade Cuba. But at the same time he conveys the apprehension of various unnamed diplomats that Cuban fears may be justified. "None of us thought they would invade Grenada, either," one of the diplomats is reported to have said.

Treaster provides speculation on other motives for the Cuban defense preparations. In this regard, he reports that Cuban officials have denied "they were orchestrating a nationwide drama intended to portray President Reagan as a threat to world peace and thus to influence the U.S. elections."

The Cuban officials quoted by the *Times* reporter point to the mounting evidence of an imminent attack on Cuba: the widening of the U.S. network of military bases in Honduras, the expansion of U.S. military facilities in Puerto Rico and elsewhere in the Caribbean, and the large-scale maneuvers in the waters around Cuba itself.

Ricardo Alarcon de Quesada, a member of the Central Committee of the Cuban Communist Party, is quoted as indicating that part of Cuba's strategy is to convince any possible aggressor that the people there are "prepared to fight for every inch of soil."

A new Vietnam War

No one should have the slightest doubt of this. A U.S. invasion of Cuba would be very costly in human life—on both sides. The evidence is overwhelming that the population of Cuba, armed and well-trained, will put up an awesome resistance to a U.S. imperialist invasion.

The revolutionary Castroist government has shown great confidence in the



Cuban people. Through a series of mobilizations and rallies, it has systematically informed the Cuban people of the stakes involved in the ongoing struggle against U.S. imperialism.

The cost to the U.S. government of an invasion of Cuba would be enormous. A massive protest movement throughout the world would be a certain result. Latin America would be transformed into a seething cauldron. U.S. workers facing an ongoing offensive against their living standards—in contrast to the capitalist policy of concessions granted to workers during the Vietnam war—would add an explosive dimension to such a protest movement.

But there may be more to the current escalation of Cuban defense preparations than has yet been suggested in the capitalist media. Faced with increasing saber-rattling and actual war measures instituted by the U.S. government, a peace offensive has been launched by the embattled revolutionists in Nicaragua and El Salvador.

The Sandinista government of Nicaragua has recently accepted the Contadora nations' proposals as a basis for

ending the conflict in Central America. The Salvadoran FMLN-FDR, having advanced a new peace plan earlier this year, is now engaged in peace negotiations with the Salvadoran government headed by Jose Napoleon Duarte.

It is clear that the U.S. imperialist government's aim is to force a settlement in Central America on terms that are consistent with its long-range goal of rolling back and ultimately crushing the revolutionary upsurge in the region.

On the other side, the Central American revolutionaries hope to achieve a detente that would preserve their material gains. They hope this would allow the resumption of their offensive when objective conditions—a deepening of the economic and political crisis for imperialism and its vassals in Latin America—changed to their advantage.

This is the context in which the Cuban government has instituted a vigorous intensification of its defense preparations. It constitutes an objective signal to imperialism that Cuba will not stand aside—as they were compelled to do during the invasion of Grenada—if negotiations break down and U.S.

imperialism should escalate its efforts to crush the Central American revolution.

This is the strong side of the Castroist leadership of the Cuban revolution. Their *military* commitment to the struggle against imperialist oppression is without equal.

But they have a weaker side which comes from their theoretical shortcomings and, to an indeterminate degree, from their dependence on material aid doled out by the Stalinist rulers of the Soviet Union. This dependence makes them vulnerable to the influence of the counterrevolutionary political orientation of the Soviet bureaucrats.

Under this pressure, the Cuban revolutionaries make the mistake of seeing qualitative differences between factions of the capitalist class in every country. This is evidenced by their expressed belief that President Reagan represents the "war" faction while presidential candidate Mondale represents the "peace" faction of U.S. capitalism. (This is the grain of truth in the previously cited speculation that the massive increase in Cuban defenses is intended to influence the U.S. election in November.)

More generally, this mistaken notion underlies Cuban strategic errors. The Cuban strategy is to look to the Latin American "anti-imperialist" capitalist factions as allies against U.S. imperialism rather than to the Latin American and world working class. They mistakenly subordinate the anti-capitalist aspirations of Mexican workers, for instance, to the primarily diplomatic support given to Cuba and its allies in Central America by the dominant faction of the Mexican capitalist class.

Defense of Cuban revolution

There are two things wrong with this strategy:

1) Such alliances with capitalist forces must be limited by a pledge to remain within the framework of capitalist reforms—hobbling the revolutionary potential of workers and peasants. This is why top Cuban leader Carlos Rafael Rodriguez advised the revolutionary Sandinista government in Nicaragua *not* to follow the model of the Cuban socialist revolution.

2) This strategy rules out for the foreseeable future the perspective of socialist revolution in Latin America and in the world. The Cuban leadership rationalizes this perspective with the assertion that El Salvador and Nicaragua, unlike Cuba, are not ready for the socialist revolution.

The Cuban government recognizes that real solidarity with the Central American revolution could lead to imperialist retaliation against Cuba in the event of an imperialist invasion. And it is preparing militarily for this possibility. But in the final analysis only a strategy based on the workers' struggle to conquer state power in Central America and in the rest of the world can unleash the elemental class forces that can provide the most effective defense of the Cuban socialist revolution. ■

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The 67th anniversary of the Russian revolution

By SEAN FLYNN

Sixty-seven years ago, on Nov. 7, 1917, the workers of Russia, supported by the peasantry and led by the Bolshevik Party, succeeded in overthrowing the state of the capitalists and landlords. In so doing, the Russian workers opened up a new historical epoch, the epoch of the socialist revolution.

Many lessons can be drawn from the Russian revolution: the interrelationship between democratic demands such as land reform or national liberation and the anti-capitalist struggle; the need to support the revolution by social overturns in the advanced countries, since socialism cannot be built within the confines of a single country; or the role of a revolutionary party in guiding the struggle, first against the old regime and later in creating the new society.

But one of the most important lessons of the Russian Revolution is, at the same time, the one most obscured by the passage of history: the lesson that

socialism can only be the product of the workers themselves.

In Russia, the revolution was not a coup d'etat which toppled Kerensky's Provisional Government only to impose a new set of rulers. Rather, the fall of the old regime culminated a process of the self-organization and mobilization of the workers in their own factory councils, motivated by the government's failure to do anything to relieve mass suffering, to pull out of World War I, to distribute the land, or to free the nations long oppressed by tsarism.

Intimately linked to the only source of workers' power, their role in economic production and distribution, these councils or "soviets" represented a new authority which undermined not only the Kerensky regime, but the rule of the boss at the shop floor level. It was all over for the Provisional Government when the bulk of the army, fed up by five years of war, began electing their own soldiers' councils affiliated to the workers' councils.

Within these councils, the workers

and soldiers debated the programs of the contending political parties and elected (or recalled) their delegates to higher councils. Thus, within Russia a democratic hierarchy of soviets existed from top to bottom. This council—or soviet—state inherited power on Nov. 7, 1917, and began the socialist revolution.

Workers' democracy

Socialism, an international society in which the factories, mines, and other economic entities are no longer owned by private capitalists but are run by the workers themselves, cannot be imposed from on high. On the economic level, the transition to socialism begins with "workers' control," the right of employees to oversee their employers. Through experience, workers' control evolves into "workers management."

And the instrument of this progressive evolution is the factory council, the foundation of the Russian state in late 1917.

The USSR today is a far cry from the Soviet Russia of 1917. Soviet democracy withered under the concentrated fire of

invasion and civil war. The blockade of Russia shut down the factories at the same time that thousands of workers fell at the front defending their revolution.

In this environment, the workers' councils ceased to be the representative bodies they once were. The defeat of the German revolution of 1918 ended the possibility of any short-term succor to the beleaguered revolution. And the result of the prolonged isolation of this predominantly peasant country was the rise of a bureaucratic ruling caste, intent on preserving its own material privileges, not only from capitalism, but from the workers themselves.

Self-preservation of the bureaucracy became more important than the liberation of the workers and peasants of the world. "Workers' democracy" disappeared from the lexicon of the official "communist" movement.

Political revolution

Yet the privileged status of the bureaucracy is rooted in the continued existence of state property in the economy, a planned economy which does not follow the dictates of private profit. State property remains the legacy of the Bolshevik Revolution, a legacy which still poses the possibility of the transition to socialism.

This possibility remains shackled by the bureaucratic caste, and only a new revolution, overthrowing the bureaucracy, can release the potential of the collectivized economy. But only the workers themselves can overthrow the parasites and re-establish democratic self-rule.

The Polish workers, organized in Solidarnosc, have shown that the prospect of a political revolution in the bureaucratized workers' states of Eastern Europe and Asia is no pipedream. The Polish workers, armed by the knowledge that without them the economy stops, challenged the fundamental basis of bureaucratic rule by demanding their proper place in the management of the economy, foreshadowing the creation of the factory councils.

Solidarnosc today is banned. But through it, the obscured lesson of the Russian Revolution once again reared its head: *Socialism can only be the product of the workers themselves.* ■

...GOP '84

(continued from page 1)

combined assault of right-wing politics and right-wing religion.

Prayer in public schools has been supported by both Republicans and Democrats, but the Supreme Court in 1963 blocked that effort to break down the barrier between church and state. Since the Court has swung so far to the right, the prayer people hope for a new, more favorable decision.

Until recently the church-state conflict has remained low key. Mainline Protestant churches have supported the First Amendment. Many have taken liberal stands on such issues as civil rights, war issues, and women's liberation. Membership in these churches has fallen. According to a series of polls, Americans' interest in religion in general has declined. In 1952, 75 percent of people asked said religion was very important to them. By 1983 that figure had dropped to 56 percent.

In the light of these figures why is religion an issue in this campaign? The answer lies in a combination of factors: a conservative administration and an alliance of the political far right with the ultra-right fundamentalist church as exemplified by Jerry Falwell and the Moral Majority.

Evangelical and fundamentalist churches have long remained on the fringes of American religious experience. But radio and television have given new life to the Bible-thumping preachers of sin and salvation. Through radio a single preacher can reach a nationwide audience of millions.



The doctrine preached is simplistic, anti-intellectual, and authoritarian. The only truth is found in the Bible as interpreted by the ministers. Reason will not lead humanity to truth; only unquestioning faith in the scriptures can do that. All other religious denominations are not Christian, but agents of the devil who is contending with God for the souls of the American people. God has selected the United States as his chosen people.

But America must be cleansed of the moral rot that is corroding its Christian foundations. This moral rot, which is the work of the devil, takes the form of homosexuality, abortion, secular humanism as espoused by Protestants,

the Equal Rights Amendment, the United Nations, fluoridation of drinking water, and communism-socialism-liberalism. Preaching in radio stations and churches is not enough to defeat the devil. Christians must get into politics.

In defense of capitalism

Here an alliance with the political far right gives support to both forces. The Moral Majority's views on social questions echo those of the John Birch Society: Capitalism has been ordained by God; success in business is a sign of godliness; trade unions interfere with a businessman's God-given right to control his own property. The income tax must be abolished. Welfare destroys the

moral fiber of the recipient. War with the Soviet Union is inevitable. We must prepare for it and win it.

Last July 300 fundamentalist ministers met with Reagan in the White House. They came to anoint Reagan as "God's chosen leader."

Reagan, who seldom goes to church, accepted the cloak of sanctity for the sake of the votes he might gain.

Motivation and shock troops

The political and religious right have a perspective going beyond this year's election. They are reacting to a crisis of capitalism that has no solution under bourgeois democracy. They seek an authoritarian state with an ideology that will keep the masses in line. In the struggle for capitalist survival the political right is counting on the religious right to provide the motivation and the shock troops. What can develop from this alliance is essentially an American fascist movement.

It is by no means certain that the religious ingredient will build the mass movement for a fascist takeover. It is true, however, that thousands of young people have been recruited to the ultra-right religious movement, brainwashed, and deprived of the capacity for logical thought. They are reacting to the blind alley of capitalism and the threat of nuclear war.

If there were another pole of attraction—a vital growing labor movement, a mass movement of social struggle offering hope of a change—this turn to life-destroying religious cults could be deflected. The working class must mobilize and demonstrate that there is an alternative to Armageddon and nuclear destruction. ■



Mark Crabtree

United Steelworkers convention: Officials place all hope in Mondale

By MARIE WEIGAND

CLEVELAND—“Steelworkers together in 1984 with Mondale and Ferraro will make America work again,” proclaimed banners at the 22nd convention of the United Steelworkers of America (USWA).

The 3203 delegates meeting here on Sept. 24-28 represented approximately 740,000 working members—down almost 47 percent over the last few years. Since the last convention, the employer offensive against steelworkers has intensified. In February 1983 a concession contract was approved in basic steel that will cost the average worker \$11,745 in wages and benefits. Plant closings and long-term layoffs have reached epidemic proportions. Other jobs have been lost through job combination, contracting out, and super crafts (cross crafting). Forty-two USWA locals are on strike; 26 of these strikes are over three months old.

Most delegates regarded the appearance of Democratic presidential candidate Walter Mondale as a highlight of the convention. Delegates interrupted his speech with applause and favorable chants so frequently that Mondale quipped, “I think I’ll package you and take you with me for the rest of the campaign.”

The Mondale/Ferraro resolution described Mondale as a “friend of long standing” whose election is “our first priority.”

Resolutions on such varied topics as collective bargaining, unemployed members, and women’s rights all included references to the USWA’s endorsement of Mondale. International President Lynn Williams described the defeat of Ronald Reagan as the most important task facing the union. “We had a lot to do with putting Walter Mondale on the ticket. Now let’s put him where he belongs—in the White House.”

Mondale took credit for pushing through the Chrysler settlement that resulted in record profits for the bosses, but large-scale concessions and layoffs for the workers. Although he urged a similar plan for the steel industry, delegates failed to question this misuse of union resources. No one mentioned that both the Democrats and the Republicans have consistently supported the employers’ offensive against steelworkers and that these attacks will continue regardless of whether Reagan or Mondale wins the election.

Much of the praise for Mondale related to his willingness to support the USWA bureaucracy’s attempt to limit steel imports. The openly racist and chauvinist language of past USWA

debates was toned down in favor of a call for a “rational” worldwide division of labor which would protect the rights of American workers. Minor opposition was expressed during the debate on the Fair Trade in Steel Act resolution.

Opposition to constitutional changes

A special committee proposed a series of changes in the USWA constitution. Although all the proposals were adopted, two changes met with significant opposition. One permits the International Executive Board to fill any vacancies among the international officers, district directors, and the national director of Canada for the remainder of the term.

Opponents of this change argued that there should be a set line of succession among the other officers. Approximately 40 percent of the delegates voted against this change. Since many steelworkers had feared membership election of officers would be eliminated, a number of resolutions reaffirmed support to this important democratic right.

The other controversial change concerned the strike and defense fund. Prior to the convention, there was almost \$218 million in this fund. The change adopted provides that no more money will be put into this fund whenever it reaches \$200 million. The fund will be allowed to sink to \$180 million before any further contributions are made.

Opponents of this change advanced two arguments. One group opposed taking any money from the strike and defense fund, arguing that to do so would signal to the companies that no serious fight would be waged in the next basic steel negotiations. These delegates argued that increased payments should be made to strikers—especially long-term strikers—so they would not be starved into accepting substandard contracts.

Other opponents agreed that a \$180-200 million strike and defense fund is sufficient, but objected to the proposed use of the money. They argued that it should be used to set up special programs to assist long-term laid-off members.

Only one of the proposed constitutional changes which failed generated any opposition. Approximately 20 percent of the delegates supported a proposal to reduce the number of top officers from five to three.

During the discussion supporters of the Rank-and-File Caucus did not coordinate their activities. Such well-known oppositionist delegates as Jim Balanoff and Ed Sadlowski didn’t speak. However, other well-known oppositionists, including Ron Weisen (president Local 1397), Mike Bonn (president Local

2227), Cec Taylor (president Local 1005), and Mike Olszanski (Local 1010) spoke several times.

Policy resolutions

The 51 policy resolutions recommended by the resolutions committee were compiled from 1413 resolutions submitted by local unions. These included resolutions on unemployed members, coordinated bargaining, grievance and arbitration procedure, strikes, plant closings, women’s rights, civil rights, and nuclear freeze. No significant opposition was raised to any resolution proposed by the resolutions committee.

Some delegates pointed favorably to some of the strong provisions in several resolutions, but expressed doubt that the International officers would follow through on their implementation.

The world affairs resolution hailed the election of Jose Napoleon Duarte in El Salvador, accused leftist guerrillas of waging a war directed at the civilian population, and urged that future U.S. military aid be conditioned on the implementation of the U.S.-backed land-reform program.

Joe Lindenmuth (president Local 2265) urged the delegates to return this resolution to committee to be rewritten to correctly reflect the situation in Cen-

en’s rights.

Following a film of the Phelps Dodge strike, Angel Rodriguez, president of one of the striking locals, told the delegates, “It’s your strike too. You can see the union busters at work. Believe me, if we lose it, you’ll lose in the long run.”

Former International President I.W. Abel spoke mainly about the Phelps Dodge strike, describing the Arizona cops as “seal hunters clubbing innocent victims,” and urging the USWA to take a stand in support of the copper miners. “These fights are the fight of all of us,” Abel said. “The labor movement is at stake. If you think you’ve given concessions, just wait until you lose your union.”

A collection to aid USWA strikers netted about \$8500.

No challenge to supporting Democrats

Throughout the convention, no one challenged the USWA’s support for the Democratic Party. Although Robert Rae of the Ontario New Democratic Party spoke on the accomplishments of his party, no delegate questioned why the USWA doesn’t support a labor party in the United States. However, concern was expressed that support for Mondale not be allowed to take away from discussion of pressing issues. One delegate raised his displeasure with the constant references to Mondale in the policy resolutions, saying, “Win or lose in November, we’ll still be faced with these problems and have to discuss how to deal with them.”

In discussing the strike resolution, Ron Weisen argued that the \$200,000 the USWA spent at the Democratic Party convention and the \$40,000 it spent at the Republican Party conven-

‘The growing discontent with the concession-bargaining strategy was reflected in the large number of resolutions demanding an end to concessions.’

tral America. He said that U.S. multinational corporations and the U.S. government are creating the problems and that the resolution should clearly come out against all U.S. military aid. Describing the official resolution as an injustice to the workers of Central America and the Caribbean, Lindenmuth was frequently interrupted by applause during his remarks, although very few delegates voted against the official resolution.

A number of Black and women delegates advocated that issues of particular relevance to minorities be adequately addressed. At the urging of Black delegates, the civil rights resolution was moved up on the agenda. A special meeting was also held for women delegates. Although the meeting was billed as a discussion on the gender gap, participants raised such issues as sexual harassment, day care, the role of women in the union, and the need to publicize the union’s support for wom-

tion could better be spent on the picket line.

Weisen’s argument that “we stop shaking hands with management and start shaking our fist at them” brought a great response from the delegates.

Although there was no organized opposition, the growing discontent with the bureaucracy’s concession-bargaining strategy was reflected in the large number of resolutions from local unions demanding an end to concessions, restoration of contract cuts, and improved wages and benefits.

The militant language included in some of the policy resolutions was a clear reflection of steelworkers’ increasing anger. Although no one put forward a strategy to effectively counter the bosses’ offensive, the response to the presentation on the Phelps Dodge strike was one indication of an increasing awareness that the non-adversarial methods touted by the USWA officialdom aren’t working. ■

On the picket line



No magic at Disneyland

By DAVID ROBERTSON

ANAHEIM, Calif.—The strike at Disneyland is over. The 1844 members of five striking unions voted to accept a contract after 22 days on strike. The contract accepted is only a minimum improvement over the contract offered Sept. 25, before the strike.

The unions, led by the Teamsters, rejected the first proposal and set up picket lines around the "Magic Kingdom" on Sept. 25. One of the key issues was Disneyland's proposal to deny health benefits to all employees until they reach the 20-hour, five-day status. As George Parks, a spokesman for the union, pointed out, 45 percent of the workers at Disneyland are part-timers. Another key issue was the Disneyland refusal to guarantee that current employees would not lose any hours to subcontractors. The company declared it would start rehiring on Oct. 11, and it did.

In the face of the company's threat to hire replacement workers and fire all strikers, the Disneyland workers held a solidarity meeting on Oct. 11 attended by international representatives from each of the striking unions. The president of the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor pledged the support of the labor movement for their strike.

The Labor Alliance Against Conces-

sions suggested to union officials the necessity of labor solidarity and a boycott of Disneyland. Since Disneyland sends blocks of discount tickets to unions, a boycott could have been very effective. Members of the Labor Alliance joined the picketline.

On Oct. 15 the company presented its new proposal. They still demanded a two-year freeze on wages, but no longer froze new-hired employees out of health benefits. But to be eligible for these benefits they must work 20 hours spread over a period of five days. This means workers must go to Disneyland and work five days a week, even if they are offered only two or three hours of work.

A bad feature of the contract involves sub-contracting work to non-union firms. The company proposed that any worker could be laid off when an outside firm was hired to do his or her job. The new contract limits the number so displaced to 10 percent of the work force—still a serious threat to the five unions involved.

Could the unions have won a better contract? Without question. The labor movement should have been rallied to the unions' defense. Banners of other workers terrified of unemployment and being left out on a limb. As it is, the best that can be said is that the unions are intact. They will learn. As one picket said, "We will have to live with this contract. It will be hard to work next to scabs. But we will be here to fight again."

Local 2 workers reject contract



Socialist Action/Asher Harer

"Final offer—Not good enough!" This is what striking workers at 29 restaurants in San Francisco said to the restaurant owners when they voted by a 95 percent margin to continue their strike last Oct. 23. By a vote of 603 to 31, members of the Hotel and Restaurant Workers and Bartenders Union, Local 2, rejected the giveback contract proposed by the owners. The contract offer includes a two-tier wage system and a wage freeze for current employees. Local 2 workers were forced out on strike over two months ago. This militant strike deserves the support of all trade unionists in the San Francisco Bay Area!

Kroger forces concessions

By SHIRLEY PASHOLK

CLEVELAND—On Oct. 4 striking meat-cutter members of United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 880 at 15 Kroger stores in northeast Ohio overwhelmingly voted to approve a new contract offer and return to work. The company forced the strike by imposing a \$2-per-hour pay cut when the contract expired on Sept. 10. Retail clerk members of UFCW Local 880, who had earlier approved the original offer, have also agreed to the second offer.

The new contract still includes serious concessions, including a 50 cent-

per-hour wage cut and loss of a week's vacation and three personal holidays. Sunday and holiday work will be at straight time.

By standing up to the bosses' threats to close down the stores if the original offer wasn't approved, Local 880 members were able to prevent more severe pay cuts. They showed what can be accomplished with a fight. With greater solidarity, especially on the part of the clerks, most of whom continued working, the meat cutters could have held out for a better settlement.

Contracts for approximately 14,000 UFCW members who work at major area grocery chains expired Sept. 10. Since then they have been working without a contract. Union members have stated their determination not to accept any concessions. In March 1983 UFCW members gave up several personal holidays and cost-of-living increases.

Although northeast Ohio is the ninth largest national market in terms of sales, company spokespersons are claiming poverty and demanding greater concessions than those forced on the Kroger workers.

The latest contract proposal, which the union is recommending be rejected, includes a \$1-per-hour pay cut and reduction in premium time for Sundays and holidays. A two-tiered pay formula will mean that by the end of the con-

tract in three years new full-time clerks will be paid \$7.25 per hour while new part-time clerks will receive \$5.50 per hour, well below the prevailing wage rate. Hours for new hires will range from 14 to 27 hours per week. Full benefits are given only to employees working over 28 hours per week.

Should the clerks strike, this would be the first major grocery strike in Cleveland since 1952 and in Akron since 1969.

...UAW contract

(continued from page 1)

tracts, which fail to include a traditional UAW cost-of-living provision, offer no protection against a rise in the inflation rate, which is widely predicted to erupt well before this contract expires.

The Ford contract includes a proportional \$300-million version of the misnamed GM "\$1-billion job fund."

These "job funds," promoted as an answer to lay-offs and extending over a six-year period, will offer virtually nothing in the way of real job protection.

New workers are left out entirely, and eligible workers are obliged to move to other cities and states to qualify for a new job. They must do this without adequate guarantees to justify the uprooting of their families and in many cases at a reduced pay-rate. And some workers will be "paid while being trained" for new and mostly lower-paying jobs. The \$300-million and \$1-billion funds will prove to be a trick for reducing wages and undermining existing union protection of wage standards when workers are shifted from one job category to another.

The massive rank-and-file opposition, despite the hyped-up "selling" of the GM contract by the UAW officialdom, is evidence of a wide gulf between the fighting instincts of the ranks and the defeatist mood of the union officialdom. The Canadian strike is further proof of this.

The verdict given the U.S. contracts by Canadian workers is captured in this judgment by Ben Klundert, an assembler in a GM transmission plant in

Windsor, Ontario: "They took a lousy contract in the United States, but we sure are not going to take one here."

The failure of leadership is glaring. The UAW officialdom over the years has permitted the fracturing of union solidarity on virtually every conceivable level. Workers are divided by nation, by industry, by company, and now even by plant, and are left to face a united employing class. Evidence of this can be seen in the phony "selective" GM strike ordered by the UAW union bureaucracy, which ended in a "lousy" contract.

Canadian auto workers may do better than their U.S. counterparts—it would be hard to do worse—but a basic change in strategy is required on both sides of the border before real progress can be made. It is necessary to return to the fighting traditions based on class solidarity that made the American labor movement the most powerful in the world. A new leadership based on this class-struggle perspective is certain to emerge in the coming years.

New York forum on 1934 strikes



Strikers battle police during 1934 Minneapolis truck drivers' strike.

Over 50 people attended a New York Socialist Action forum on Oct. 20 to watch "Labor's Turning Point," a film about the 1934 Teamsters' strikes and to discuss the lessons for today of the powerful movement that gave rise to industrial unions. The panel included Ray Markey, a delegate to the New York City Central Labor Council; Jake Cooper, a veteran of the 1934 strikes and a national committee member of Socialist Action; Gary Stevenson, a Teamster union organizer, Local 810; Bill Henning, second vice president, Local 1180, Communications Workers of America; and Ed Ott, vice president, Local 8-149, Oil, Chemical, and Atomic Workers Union.

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By STEPHANIE COONTZ

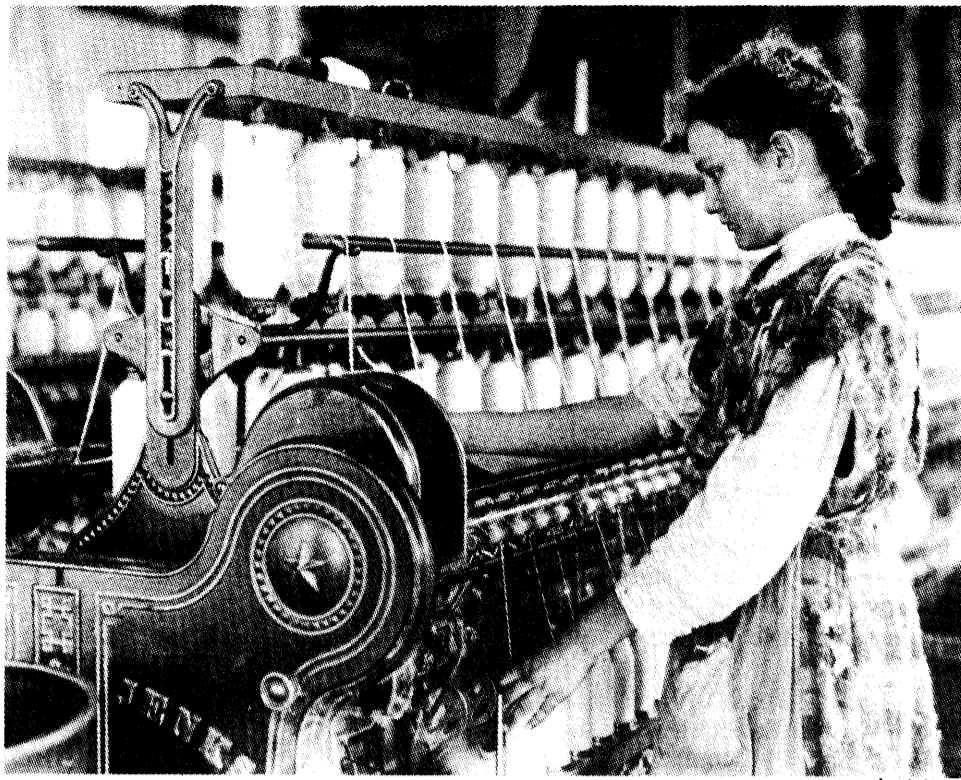
Class and Community: The Industrial Revolution in Lynn, by Alan Dawley, Harvard University Press, 1979, 301 pp., \$5.95.

In the last few years a number of young historians have begun to re-examine American history from a Marxist perspective and to destroy many of the myths of American "exceptionalism."

In this excellent book on the shoe-making industry in Lynn, Mass., Alan Dawley shows how capitalist social relations had undermined the position of the skilled artisan for several decades before the actual establishment of the factory system, and he destroys older interpretations of the early labor movement as backward-looking and conservative. He then suggests a new explanation of 19th-century labor history that is more firmly rooted in class analysis than the old idea that cheap land or higher living standards acted as a safety valve for working-class discontent.

Dawley demonstrates that the system of artisan production was an obstacle to capitalism because of the high degree of control exercised by the skilled worker over the pace, quality, and quantity of his or her work. In addition, the interdependence of artisan households allowed them to escape some of the constraints of the market, as they could and did exchange services and goods directly.

Dawley does not romanticize this period, however, pointing out that while the entwinement of personal authority and property rights created a sense of community, it also tended to prevent the



Lewis Hine

U.S. history examined from a Marxist view

ers, and the 19th-century labor movement in general, failed to sharply delineate a comprehensive working-class program. The vagueness of their "anti-monopoly" slogans allowed them to join political parties ostensibly representing the working person but in fact dominated by business interests. Thus, after the demise of the Knights of Labor, unions increasingly limited themselves to bread-and-butter demands.

Traditional explanations of labor's failure to chart a more revolutionary course in the 19th century center on the supposedly widespread satisfaction with a system that could still provide cheap land, significant social mobility, and a higher living standard than in Europe. In this self-serving analysis of American history, workers are seen as motivated, then and now, solely by considerations of individual economic advancement.

But Dawley points out that social mobility was in fact quite limited even in the 19th century. Furthermore, U.S. living standards, although relatively higher by European terms, did not stop workers from protesting their position relative to the capitalists. Workers' consciousness, moreover, was not directed primarily to individual enrichment: "Industrial workers looked mainly to collective action to improve their condition... [and] most wage earners sought to rise with their class" (p.233). The limits of the 19th-century labor movement lay not in a lack of class solidarity or militancy but in the failure to achieve independent political action.

One last progressive task

Dawley's research suggests that the reasons for labor's political failures in the 19th century are to be found in the conjunctural circumstances that gave the American capitalist class one last progressive task to accomplish just as the worst effects of industrial capitalism were beginning to be felt. The association of early democratic reforms with the demands of small property-owners had created an illusion that property rights were compatible with equality.

Although Dawley relates this only to the American revolution, it was true in Europe as well. The early European

workers' movements also believed in the possibility of convincing their employers of their just demands. But in Europe this illusion was shattered by the revolutions of 1830 and 1848, when the bourgeoisie proved conclusively its willingness to sacrifice its supposed political ideals to the defense of property.

In America, however, the presence of slavery gave the capitalists one more goal that was objectively in the interests of working people as well. The struggle against slavery temporarily obscured class differences in politics, allowing the capitalists, by virtue of their opposition to the Southern slave monopoly, to gain control of the political parties in the

North. The head start in political leadership that they thereby gained, seriously undermined the move toward independent workers' parties that had begun before the Civil War, channeling many workers into the pure and simple trade unionism of the American Federation of Labor.

Rigorous and involved

One of the most delightful aspects of Dawley's book is the proof it offers that rigorous scholarship need not be uninvolved. Dawley shows us the human effects of the social processes he describes, and he is indignant at the way mainstream historians have distorted the record. His comments on theories of pluralism are worth remembering in discussions about the meaning of equal rights in a market system:

"What is the value in a view which regards the wage bargain between employers and employees as essentially the same thing as the price bargain between a manufacturer and a merchant, and the same as the terms of a loan between a manufacturer and a banker? But... when has a manufacturer bargained for better terms with the bank by sending Pinkertons to shoot up the board meeting? What in American history is the businessman's counterpart of the workers' experience at Ludlow? When has an American corporation been destroyed by federal troops the way the American Railway Union was destroyed in the Pullman strike?" (p. 181)

In raising these questions Dawley forces the reader to take sides. At the same time he points out the potential that American workers have to end the inequality of capitalist production relations. And he does all this with more rigorous scholarship and intellectual integrity than the so-called "objective" historians who by refusing to "take sides" actually perpetuate the advantages of the capitalists.

BOOK REVIEW

formation of class solidarities. While personal interaction and payment in kind softened the inequalities of property ownership, they also disguised the conflict over the wage payment between master and journeyman.

The establishment of the factory system represented the final triumph of capital over the work process, and it led rapidly to the formation of unions and workers' parties. Traditional accounts of the struggles of Lynn shoemakers have held that they were artisans protesting competition from unskilled labor. These accounts have also asserted that American laborers struggled merely over a more just distribution of the fruits of their labor, rather than, like their European counterparts, challenging the system of capitalist production.

Activists and industrial workers

To the contrary, Dawley shows, the Lynn activists were predominantly industrial workers. They were militant, well-organized, and particularly effective because the exceptionally large numbers of female workers in Lynn permitted the development of a working-class movement united rather than divided on the basis of sex. They opposed capitalists, not other workers. Not a single strike was directed against unskilled workers or "green hands."

Yet it remains true that Lynn work-

Images from Guatemala

By VERN MAXAM

Tomorrow Triumphant, Selected Poems of Otto Rene Castillo, Bilingual ed., Night Horn Books, San Francisco, 1984, 135 pp., \$6.95.

On March 19, 1967, a young poet named Otto Rene Castillo was burned at the stake after being tortured by the Guatemalan army. Castillo met his death as a participant in the guerrilla struggle in the remote highlands of Guatemala.

Hope and optimism are central to Castillo's poetry. He juxtaposes the life and death struggle of the common peo-

ple to the despairing, escapist, dissolving world view of bourgeois art and consciousness.

POETRY REVIEW

However, the selections lack personal intimacy. Castillo's heart is in the right place, but he tends to idealize the workers; they are not quite real. The love and exile poems likewise are very moving,

but quite abstract. Left out is the learning process. In one poem, for example, "apolitical intellectuals" are confronted after the revolution by "the humble people":

What did you do when the poor suffered, when tenderness and life were dangerously burning out in them? ... A vulture of silence will eat your guts. Your own misery will gnaw at your souls. And you will be mute in your shame.

The passage is powerful, but why didn't Castillo give us a real apolitical intellectual? He must have known a few. He could have given us a real person grappling with the question of taking a stand, so the reader could come to his own conclusions.

Yet, I recommend Castillo's poetry. It relates with passion to the ongoing struggle in Latin America. It shows the future to those who will be the artists and poets of the post-revolutionary world. Castillo confronted a harsh reality that, in a sense, imposed artistic limitations upon him. But he is not afraid to be polemical or abstract—or even defective in terms of bourgeois esthetic criteria. He strives to arouse the consciences of those who do not understand, who do not see things as he does.

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Fight back!

Free Mila Aguilar!

Once again during the Oct. 21 debates Ronald Reagan announced his support for the Marcos dictatorship in the Philippines. Reagan said, "I think that we're better off... trying to retain our friendship and help them right the wrongs we see rather than throwing them to the wolves and then facing a Communist power in the Pacific."

Earlier in the debate Reagan had admitted that "things... do not look good to us from the standpoint right now of democratic rights."

This masterpiece of understatement covers up the arrests of over 70,000 Filipinos—students, teachers, clergy, workers, and peasants—since the declaration of martial law 12 years ago. Thousands more have been "salvaged"—kidnapped and killed.

Mila Aguilar is only one recent victim of the Marcos repression. Aguilar, a journalist, writer, and teacher, was arrested on Aug. 6, 1984, and charged with "subversion and conspiracy to commit rebellion."

Responding to worldwide pressure, the civilian court ordered her release. But the military circumvented the court by obtaining a Preventive Detention Action. She can now be detained indefinitely.

Mila Aguilar is currently in solitary confinement. Her cell has no windows. She is not provided with enough food or clothing.

To help secure her release and prevent torture, demand that the military heed the order of the civilian court. Write or cable: President Ferdinand Marcos, Malacanang Palace, Manila, or Ambassador Stephen W. Bosworth, U.S. Embassy, Roxas Boulevard, Manila. For more information write the Committee to Free Mila Aguilar, 5A Durham Street, Somerville, MA 02143. ■

Inside out...

A dippy defense

By MICHAEL SCHREIBER

Who would know more about atomic bombs than the folks who make 'em? That's what we asked when we heard that the Lawrence Livermore Radiation Laboratory has spent \$175,000 of your tax money to find out what factory workers should do to survive a nuclear war. Their conclusion? Jump into a swimming pool wearing "as much clothing as possible."

What if your factory doesn't have a swimming pool? You might duck the blast by wrapping yourself in a "wet, opaque blanket," the Rad Lab suggests. Besides, swimming pools aren't always sanitary.

Nervous Nellies menace the brave new world of genetic engineering. This was the theme relayed to the annual convention of the Industrial Biotechnology Association, which took place last month in San Francisco. "It would not surprise me to see some of the anti-nuclear negativists extend their negativism to genetic engineering," Professor Harold Green doublespoke to the biotechnocrats. Dreams of cashing in quickly on the test-tube baby boom are threatened by the use of measures such as the National Environmental Policy Act—an ancient law from the 1960s that Professor Green scientifically categorizes as "an instrument of the Devil."

Laundry rooms and chicken coops all over South Africa have been converted to the production of Kubus, a get-rich-quick concoction produced mainly from spoiled milk. White suburban "farmers" pay \$495 to a parent company for mysterious "activator microorganisms" to curdle their milk, and thus produce Kubus—which they can sell back to the company for profit. A Kubus spokesman points out patriotically that Kubus kits are not sold to Black people because "They would earn too much money and stop working, and this would damage South Africa's economy."

"It was like picking up gold or diamonds straight off the ground," a clerk for one Kubus company confided to the *Los Angeles Times*. "Now people are losing faith, and without faith the whole Kubus industry will fail."

Actually, nobody seems quite sure just what all that spoiled milk is supposed to accomplish—except make millions for the companies. Nevertheless, one firm plans to market Kubus worldwide in the form of a beauty cream called "Cleopatra's Secret."

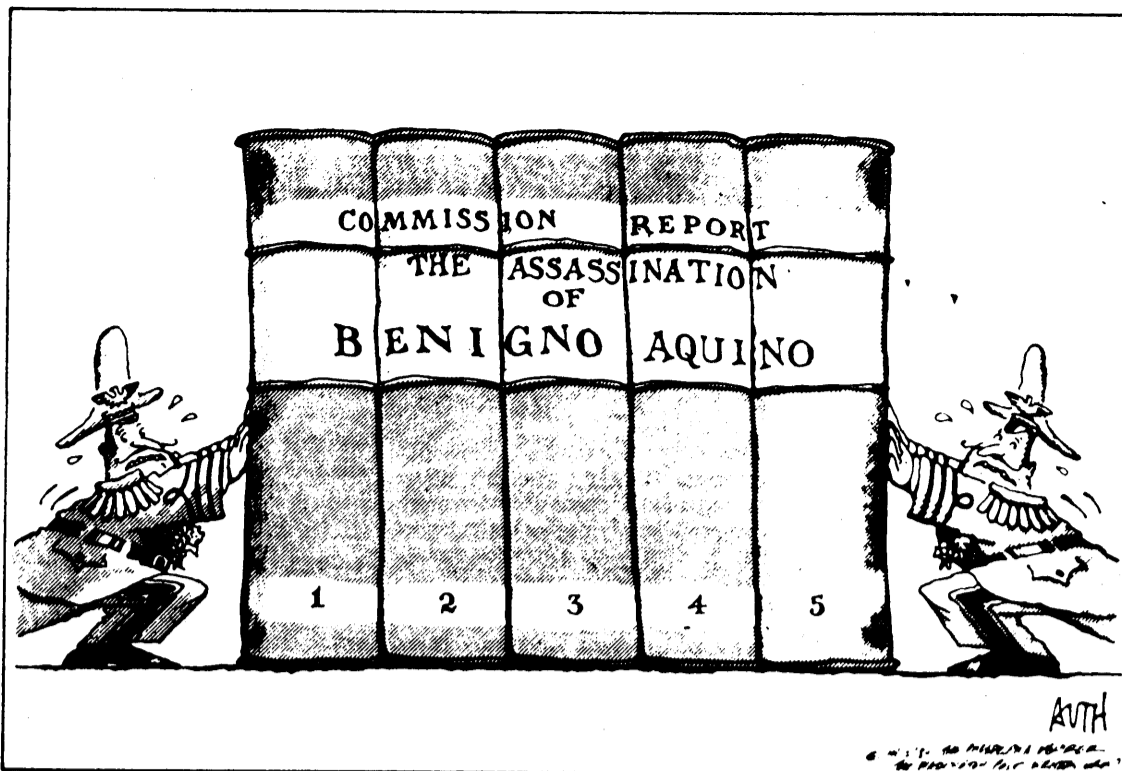
They'll test it out in California, natch.

Dethroned Miss America, Vanessa Williams, is talking to publishers about writing her autobiography—a book that will tell all, according to her literary agent. But Williams has been beaten to the cash register by the man that *Forbes Magazine* called "the sex symbol of this year's recovery."

This month, Chrysler Corporation's hairy-chested Lee Iacocca will embark on a no-nonsense campaign to sell 300,000 copies of his new book about himself. Sorry, no center-fold photo in this one.

P.S.—it's Christmas buying time again! And remember, it's not too early to start saving up for Christmas 1985, either. Those of you who can afford it will want to purchase Cornelia Guest's "The Debutante's Guide to Life."

It comes out in better book stores next autumn, a helpful sales rep advises. "Just in time for that winter's deb season." ■



Letters to editor

1933-1984

Dear editor:

In the main lines of his analysis, Charles Post ("Lesser evil won't work this time either," September 1984) is undoubtedly right. It is unquestionably a mistake to believe that the Democrats are any less committed to the maintenance of American capitalism than the Republicans are; both parties are our enemies.

That said, however, it does not follow that we must sit out their election. For Post insists on a false alternative: either disperse our "meager" resources in a useless attempt to defeat Reagan, or "dig in for the long haul and patiently construct mass-action-oriented" organizations. In fact it is possible to do both. We can vote against Reagan (i.e. "for" Mondale), and we can construct mass organizations. To cast a vote entails no dispersal of resources; you can do it on the way to a rally.

You not only can, but you should. Four more years of the present regime could seriously impair our ability to organize by eroding our legal rights. Imagine, for example, a Reagan equivalent of the Palmer Raids. Imagine also what Reagan's government will do in Nicaragua. In Reagan (as your cartoons admit!) we are confronting another Hitler. If we take that comparison seriously—and we ought to—then we ought also to remember Trotsky's words to the German communists in 1932:

"Is it correct that in order to destroy unemployment and

misery it is first necessary to destroy capitalism? It is correct. But only the biggest blockhead can conclude from all this that we do not have to fight this very day, with all of our forces, against the measures with whose aid capitalism is increasing the misery of the workers... When one of my enemies sets before me small daily portions of poison and the second, on the other hand, is about to shoot straight at me, then I will first knock the revolver out of the hand of my second enemy, for this gives me an opportunity to get rid of my first enemy."

By contrast, *Socialist Action* has been taking a line awfully similar to that of the Stalinist Comintern: Both parties are "social fascists" so don't help either of them. That line led to we know what disaster. Let's not repeat it.

William McCarthy
Ames, Iowa

Jesse Jackson

Dear editor:

I'd like to commend you for the "plague on both your houses" position you have taken toward the Democrats and Republicans in this election. At a time when most of the U.S. left is shamelessly rushing onto the Democratic bandwagon, *Socialist Action* is among the handful of organizations holding out for anti-capitalist electoral politics.

It's clear that Jesse Jackson's candidacy played a large part in softening up the left and "progressives" for Mon-

dale this year, in part by refostering the illusion that the Democrats are "reformable" by virtue of Jackson's presence within the party. I was therefore glad that your article on Jackson's candidacy undertook to dispel that illusion.

Still, you could have gone farther with an examination of Jackson's positions on the issues. I think this would have made it clearer why Jackson is trying to "reform" the Dems. It would have shown how much *he is one of them*: pro-capitalist, pro-imperialist, and anti-radical to the core...

Given all this, why did leftists so passionately endorse this man for president? Panic in the face of "Reaganism" is part of the reason, but not all.

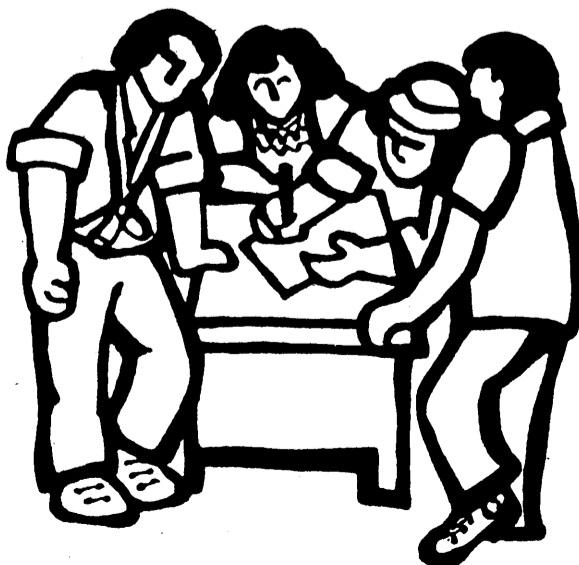
There's something else involved: *Racism*, the liberal variety that views Blacks as an undifferentiated mass, politically homogenous, and unvaryingly "progressive" and right-on in any course they choose. Jesse Jackson is Black, he is oppressed; therefore, to liberal leftists, he is somehow fundamentally different—and better—than the rest of the Democrats. This is *skin-color politics*, supposedly anathema to the left.

Left support for Jackson and the Dems is all the more horrifying in light of the tremendous opportunities for independent political action. The Rainbow Coalition is an exciting idea, which was stolen by Jackson in order to seduce a potentially radical constituency into the Democrats' camp.

We need a *real* Rainbow Coalition, i.e., unity among the racially and sexually oppressed in a *labor party*. That's the key to winning independence from Reaganism, the Democrats, and the reformism that has so far helped to keep the two-party system afloat—amidst the carcasses of movements gutted of leadership and militancy on their way to "acceptance" in the bourgeois electoral arena.

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



Land of the rich and home of the homeless

By SYLVIA WEINSTEIN

San Francisco is a "Democratic" city. That is, the mayor is a Democrat and at least 10 of the 11 supervisors are Democrats. The election campaigns are always touted as "independent" but they are far from independent. Money pours into the coffers of "independent" Democrats from the rich of this city. Those who pay the piper call the tune. That's what happens in San Francisco.

San Francisco has been turned into the playground of the rich. Housing for the working class and the poor has been torn down to allow for construction of high-rent condominiums. Large areas of the city have been turned over to luxury hotels and tourist attractions. The city has become a nest of high-cost restaurants, shopping centers, and hotels. The waterfront, which used to service shipping and provide jobs for longshoremen, builders, and other blue-collar workers is now a tourist playland.

When low-cost housing is torn down and replaced by high-rent condos, blue-collar workers are forced to look elsewhere for housing. The high cost of rents in this city has forced many workers to live in the outskirts of San Francisco and to commute to the city to earn their living. Workers who do live here must double up to afford the \$800 to \$900 per month for a two-bedroom apartment.

Single women with children are in the worst position. Despite a rent measure designed to stop discrimination against families with children, discrimination still exists. When children are involved rents jump higher, or these families are simply denied apartments.

The Western Addition, which used to be primarily a Black neighborhood, looks like it has been stepped on by Godzilla. Whole blocks of housing were torn down to create Japan Town, which was supposed to provide jobs and upgrade the area for the benefit of the citizens of the Western Addition. Instead this giant commercial hoax provided no jobs to Blacks, destroyed housing, and forced Blacks to leave their community for other areas.

Special treatment

Children in San Francisco get "special" treatment too. Most children of school age are "latch-key" children. Their parents must work to provide them with food and housing, while the children are left unattended for the day. The waiting list for childcare numbers in the thousands, while the cost of private childcare runs to \$300 per month and more.

We have dozens of underused school buildings and thousands of unemployed teachers with early childhood training credentials, while our children are left to roam the streets. Yet the politicians

can only find new ways to give tax breaks to the wealthy. At one time, in this beautiful city, children could go for free to the zoo, museums, and such places as the Japanese tea garden in Golden Gate park. Not now.

Labor has also felt the whip of our Democratic politicians. Anti-labor injunctions have been issued by the Democratic-controlled courts, turning freedom of speech and assembly into a joke. In this city the right to free speech and assembly is not for striking workers.

Just ask the workers at Macy's and Emporium department stores, who were thrown in jail for violating an injunction that restricted their right to picket.

Or ask the restaurant workers who are on now on strike and have also been arrested for picketing. The politicians leave no doubt on whose side they are.

I am sure that this description of conditions in San Francisco is typical of most cities—whether Democratic-or Republican-controlled. The political system is set up to guarantee profits first and foremost. Whichever Democratic or Republican lovelies are elected, they are certain to continue their attacks against working people, turning more of our resources over to the rich to do with as they please.

However, I'm convinced that this system is living on borrowed time. Working people, just as those in other coun-

tries, will rise up against their oppressors and take control over their destiny.

Whatever we have gained has been won in struggle. Women fought for and won their right to vote. Trade unions were organized in spite of the cops, bosses, and courts. Black parents and their children marched by the millions in Selma, Montgomery, and elsewhere to destroy Jim Crow segregation. Copper miners in Arizona are showing the same fighting capacity as the miners of England. The people of Latin America have fought against oppression and have made giant gains in Cuba and Nicaragua. That's the future—a future for the human race—not the rat race. ■

Springsteen has Reagan dancing in the dark

By MARK HARRIS

Every election has its share of distortions and lies, but Ronald Reagan was really dancing in the dark with this one. A Reagan press aide recently told the *Los Angeles Herald Examiner*, perhaps hoping to counter some negative criticism regarding the "age" factor, that Ronald Reagan listens to Bruce Springsteen's records *all the time*.

Can't you just picture it? The lights are low, a couple of empty six-packs litter the table, the chandelier swings from the ceiling, Bruce Springsteen's latest hit, "Dancing in the dark," blasts from the stereo as Ronnie and Nancy dance up a storm at a late-night party for two.

Sound far-fetched? Then again perhaps this late-night carousing explains Reagan's fondness for a little afternoon snooze during cabinet meetings. Maybe it also explains why Reagan can't seem to make it to church on Sunday mornings, contrary to his stated excuse that he was forced to give up church-going because he fears a terrorist attack.

Yes, like a bolt of lightning from the great campaign manager in the sky who, despite conservative assurances, actually may not be a Republican. I must confess, however, that I am willing to take Reagan at his word since I too, when I was younger, tried to avoid church by citing my fear of a terrorist attack while singing hymns. But I'm afraid Reagan got further with this excuse than I ever did.

Reagan likes the beat

In any case, maybe Reagan just likes a song with a good beat, because it is hard to imagine he would care for Springsteen's lyrics. A more likely explanation is that Reagan admires Springsteen's popularity, and hopes that



by invoking the name of one of the most popular musicians around a little of Springsteen's aura will rub off and bring a few votes his way.

Reagan's campaign aides apparently got the idea of enrolling Springsteen in the re-election campaign after conservative columnist George Will described Springsteen as an example of a hard worker dedicated to old-fashioned American values. Will thinks American workers could do themselves a favor by applying themselves to their work as hard as "Yankee doodle Springsteen" does.

Of course, Will got it all wrong. Anyone who listens to Bruce Springsteen knows that he sings about an American dream shattered by injustice. Springsteen's musical vision is far removed from the cherubic America existing in Ronald Reagan's brain.

But Reagan was not deterred as Springsteen declined an invitation to appear at one of his campaign rallies. On Sept. 19 Reagan said in a speech in Hammonton, N.J.: "America's future rests in a thousand dreams inside our hearts. It rests in the message of hope in the songs of a man so many young Americans admire: New Jersey's own Bruce Springsteen. And helping you make those dreams come true is what this job of mine is all about."

Reagan's favorite album?

Two days after Reagan's remark, Springsteen, by way of rebuttal, told a concert crowd in Pittsburgh, "The president was mentioning my name the other day, and I kind of got to wondering what his favorite album must have been. . . . I don't think he's been listening to this one."

Springsteen then sang "Johnny 99," a song about an unemployed steelworker who gets drunk, shoots someone, and is

sentenced to 99 years in prison.

The next night Springsteen told his audience of a long walk he took from the Lincoln Monument to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. "And it's a long way," he added, "from a government that's supposed to represent all of the people to where we are today. . . and sometimes it's hard to remember that this place belongs to us, that this is our hometown."

Springsteen then sang "Our Hometown," a song about a father showing his son the closed factories where he used to work.

"There's something really dangerous happening to us out there," Springsteen said. "We're slowly getting split up into two different Americas. Things are getting taken away from people that need them and given to people that don't need them. And there's a promise being broken."

Springsteen then dedicated a song to the rank-and-file steelworkers of Local 1397, headed by Ron Weisen, who has led the rank-and-file caucus that is challenging the national union bureaucracy. After the concert Springsteen met with Weisen and later announced that he was donating \$10,000 to a United Steelworkers' food bank to assist unemployed steelworkers.

Considering the voluminous files the FBI keeps on the views of ordinary citizens, you would think it would have been quite easy for the Reagan men to have figured out where Springsteen stood before trying to enlist him in their campaign.

Of course, there is a not unfounded theory that anyone who trusts George Will as a rock music critic has a serious problem and deserves what they get. But considering Reagan's illustrious acting career, it isn't surprising that he looks to Will for musical enlightenment.

Reagan's uninformed attempt to swing a few votes with Springsteen's help resulted in a minor fiasco for the president's campaign. "Bruce may have been 'born to run,'" Walter Mondale gloated, "but he wasn't born yesterday."

Mondale too, may have been born to run (a losing campaign, that is) but there is no word that he has Springsteen's vote, either.

Bruce Springsteen's lyrics create, in my opinion, an image of America—of both the suffering and resoluteness of working people in the face of corporate greed—that speaks stronger than any transparent effort on the part of Reagan or Mondale to have their picture taken with the popular musician. And one more thing—his music is pretty good too. ■

VOTE **Socialist ACTION**

It will be a great day when our schools get all the money they need, and the Navy has to hold a bake sale to buy a ship.

SYLVIA WEINSTEIN BOARD of SUPERVISORS