

# A Socialist ACTION

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First anniversary issue

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## Nicaragua targeted:

# U.S. sets stage for invasion



Socialist Action/May May Gong

By LARRY COOPERMAN

Less than one week after charges that Nicaragua was receiving MiG-21 fighter jets were conclusively refuted, new charges of a Nicaraguan arms buildup were being raised by the Reagan administration.

The administration charges followed a recent escalation in the pressures being applied against the FSLN government in the aftermath of its landslide victory in the Nicaraguan elections. On Nov. 6, an anonymous "re-election campaign adviser" leaked the story that a Soviet freighter, coming from a Black Sea port, was carrying crates that could contain MiG-21s.

On Nov. 7, and again the following day, State Department spokespersons issued warnings that the United States considered the delivery of "offensive

weapons" to Nicaragua to be "unacceptable."

At a California news conference, President Reagan refused to rule out the use of force.

Over the next few days, U.S. military preparations gathered steam. Naval exercises were conducted by 25 warships off the coast of Puerto Rico. The forces involved in the maneuvers included the

**More on Nicaragua**  
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82nd Airborne Division, which was the principal force involved in the invasion of Grenada last year.

SR-71 spyflights began to cross into Nicaraguan airspace, deliberately causing sonic booms over Managua to create a climate of terror among the Nicaraguan population. One U.S. warship was stationed off the port of Corinto and repeatedly violated Nicaraguan waters.

The Nicaraguan government, in the face of this new emergency, was forced to cancel plans for 50,000 students to help pick the vitally needed coffee crop and instead sent them to help with the defense of Managua. Defense Minister Humberto Ortega underscored the right of the Nicaraguans to receive arms to defend their revolution. "We are obligated to take all means necessary to protect ourselves. . . . If the Marines invade, they will see what the tanks are for," he said.

But in reality, the Soviet Union is

## April antiwar actions enlist support from labor

By CARL FINAMORE

The sonic booms from U.S. military spy planes flying over Managua and the large-scale military maneuvers on the Honduran border have renewed fears that an invasion of Nicaragua is imminent. Over the past weeks, informed government sources have leaked information indicating that there are dates and even blueprints for an invasion.

Whatever the accuracy of these "leaks," it is undoubtedly true that the Reagan administration plans to step up its intervention in Central America.

During the Vietnam war, the Nixon administration often consciously floated rumors of major escalations. These

which attracted over 200 participants. Several nationally prominent anti-intervention speakers addressed the meeting. These included Jerry Gordon, coordinator of the Emergency National Conference (ENC); Suzanne Ross, a national leader of the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES); and Phil Wheaton, director of the Ecumenical Program for Intera-

merican Communication and Action (EPICA).

There have also been important steps taken toward building an effective national antiwar coalition. For example, an administrative sub-committee of a national coalition of traditional peace, pacifist, and religious groups has rec-

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## Black activists back NBIPP

By ZAKIYA SOMBURU

BALTIMORE—"Unity" was the theme echoed by 170 members of the National Black Independent Political Party (NBIPP) who met here on Nov. 8. Black activists from New York to California and Texas to Michigan came to the conference, which was hosted by the Baltimore chapter of NBIPP and the student association at Morgan State University. None of the national leaders of NBIPP bothered to come.

The participants agreed that NBIPP must recruit new people and rebuild itself "from the bottom up" in accord with the grassroots approach of its founding charter. Speakers accused the present national leadership of flagrant violations of the charter and of limiting NBIPP activities to "a series of inactions."

It was pointed out in one panel discussion, for example, that NBIPP was virtually silent during the 1984 election campaigns—whereas the founding charter takes a clear stand for political

action independent of the two capitalist parties.

Some members urged local NBIPP chapters to run their own candidates in future elections. Others said that NBIPP chapters should work more closely within ongoing struggles against police brutality and on other community issues. The need for an exchange of information between chapters and for a national newspaper was stressed.

An important panel discussion was held to express international solidarity with struggles "from Grenada to South Africa."

Participants pointed out that NBIPP's founding charter clearly mandates chapters to "inform and educate the broad masses of Black people on international affairs for the purpose of developing a progressive world outlook based on our national, racial, and class interests."

The conference took up the call for NBIPP to continue its opposition to the U.S. occupation of Grenada and it endorsed the right of self-determination for the people of Central America.

Members resolved that NBIPP should play a leading role in mobilizing Black people in antiwar activity and that NBIPP should increase its work within existing antiwar and solidarity coalitions.

The conference passed a resolution that asked members to place a priority on educating people in their communities about the struggle in South Africa. The resolution states that NBIPP chapters should work together with other organizations that are in solidarity with the Azanian (South African) people. ■

**Right-wing landslide?**  
see page 2



**AS WE GO TO PRESS:**  
National coalition changes date for spring actions to April 20.

threats were usually followed by the dreadful reality of larger and more barbarous military actions against the Vietnamese people.

This issue of *Socialist Action* contains several reports on local demonstrations, rallies, and picket lines. Although called on short notice, these actions show that there is great potential for organizing a massive anti-intervention movement.

One example of the growing opportunities for anti-intervention work was a local conference on Central America held on Nov. 10 in Richmond, Va.,

**Forum: Where is China going? see pp.7-10**

# Wicket, Grimlin, and Reagan's "mandate"

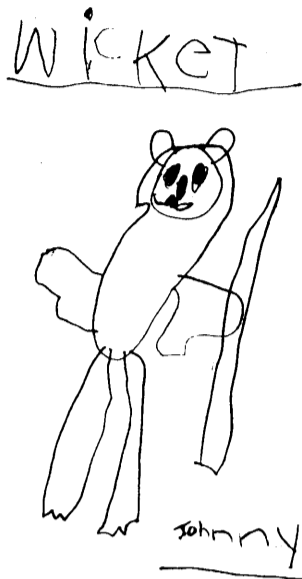
By SYLVIA WEINSTEIN

On election day, Nov. 6, I went to pick up my five-year-old grandson Johnny from kindergarten. I told him I was a little late because I had gone to vote. He informed me that he had voted also. When I asked who he voted for, he said "President Reagan, Wicket, and Grimlin."

Now you have to admit that this was a bigger choice than we adults had. But where had I gone wrong? Here I have a five-year-old grandson voting for Reagan, while I, his grandmother, am on the ballot as a socialist candidate for supervisor.

As I heroically held back a scream at having a grandson who would consider voting for Reagan, Johnny cleared himself with the story that most all the kids voted for Reagan, but some voted for the "other guy."

They all voted for "Wicket," some voted for "Grimlin," but none had voted for "Stripe."



Wicket was chosen because he helped everyone, Grimlin because he helped most of the time, and Stripe was voted down because he was just plain mean. He never again mentioned Reagan, but he enthusiastically explained that if Wicket were president he would be good to everyone and especially little kids. I began to feel a little better about his taste in candidates.

Actually it seems that a large number of the voters cast their ballots for "Wicket," just as Johnny did. Only 53.9% of those who were eligible to vote did so. Despite the millions of dollars spent by both the Democrats and Republicans to "get out the vote," only a little over half voted. This was a little more than voted in the Carter/Reagan election. The "massive landslide" for Reagan amounted to 31% for Reagan and 22% for Mondale. That is, only 31% of those eligible to vote gave a "mandate" to Reagan. Large numbers of Blacks, women, and the poor gave their votes to no one.

Sections of the "left," who hid their principles in the closet for this election and urged a vote for Mondale as the "peace" candidate, were left holding an empty bag on election eve. Labor leaders who had tried to palm Mondale off as labor's friend were soundly rejected by the working class as wishful thinkers. The advice of feminist leaders was also rejected by the vast majority of women. For women, Blacks, and workers things are as bad under Reagan as they were under Carter. It would seem that the old saying "You can't fool all the people, all the time,"



does not apply in America today. Evidently the capitalist class can fool them all the time and does.

## A turn to the right?

Did the election results reflect a turn to the right? No! In California and other states people voted for increased spending for social programs, for AFDC (Aid to Families with Dependent Children) mothers, the elderly, and the homeless. Across the country, cities and states voted for the nuclear freeze and for disarmament. In San Francisco the voters said yes to withdrawing investments from South Africa. The people do not want their money covered in blood.

Mondale, the so-called "peace" candidate, very early in the game said that he would have invaded Grenada just as Reagan did and that he would not hesitate to quarantine Nicaragua if it didn't dance to the tune of American imperialism. This didn't give the majority of the voters the impression of a "peace" candidate. Reagan, near the end of his campaign, tried to put on the face of a "peace" candidate, but he failed. No mask could hide his vicious determination to make the world safe for capitalist investments.

I received a vote of over 10,500 as a socialist candidate for supervisor in San Francisco. Over 10,500 voters agreed that it is only through massive actions—whether strikes, demonstrations, sit-ins, or marches—that we can make the gains necessary for working people and the poor. This was proven during the Vietnam war when Americans marched by the millions to bring that war to a halt.

That is what we must do again—organize ourselves together to halt the military machine and to stop the war in Central America. We must keep on the march regardless of who sits in the White House—even when it's the "Stripe" in the White House, the evil force who hurts little children. We must rally to save the children of Central America. We must mobilize to protect our sons and daughters who will be forced to kill and be killed to make the world safe for the profits of the "Stripes." ■

By MICHAEL SCHREIBER

Ronald Reagan gave his victory speech on Nov. 6 as a cloud of red, white, and blue balloons billowed overhead and a guitarist strummed Woody Guthrie's "This Land is Your Land."

The president vowed to keep "a prairie fire" of patriotism and small-town American values burning. The message of his "historic mandate" was a simple one. "The people are in charge," Reagan said.

Reagan had indeed made promises to (almost) everybody in his carefully engineered campaign rallies. He offered to reduce crime, increase student test scores, and order a manned station in space. He pledged to stimulate economic growth while reducing inflation to "zero-point-zero" and to increase military firepower while remaining "flexible" in talks with the Soviets.

The AFL-CIO failed in its attempt to steer working people clear of Ronald Reagan. According to the *New York Times*/CBS poll, for example, 53% of blue-collar workers voted for Reagan over Mondale. Despite the fact that nearly all of the 96 unions in the AFL-CIO—and such major independent unions as the National Education Association—exhorted their members to vote for Mondale, according to the Gallup poll he received a mere 52% majority from trade unionists. This fell far short of the AFL-CIO's goal of 65% for Mondale.

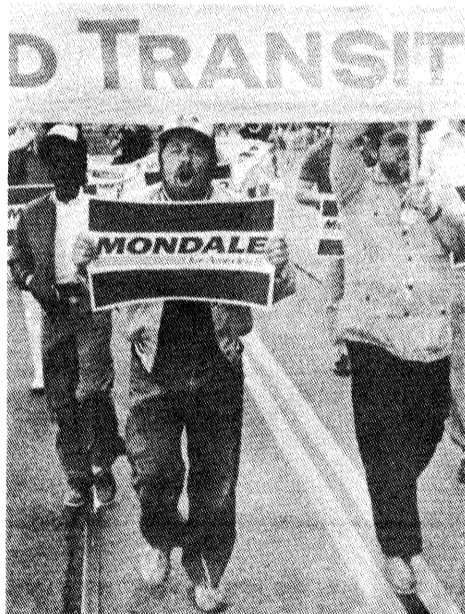
The AFL-CIO leadership leaped onto the Mondale bandwagon fully a year ago, before the state primaries had even begun to select a Democratic Party candidate. Although labor's "statesmen" kept up their panegyrics until election day—pouring more money into this voting drive than ever before in history—they gained only a lukewarm response from the ranks.

### Kirkland's roadshow

In late October, for example, AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland rented a camper truck to carry the Democratic Party message to the Midwest industrial belt. But Kirkland's roadshow played to small audiences. Most of his meetings included only local union officials instead of rank-and-file members.

"This place should have been filled wall-to-wall," Steve Major, vice president of District 1 of the International

## Labor leaders fail with Mondale bid



Greyhound workers march for Mondale.

Union of Operating Engineers, lamented, as he surveyed the many empty seats that greeted Kirkland in Cleveland's Laborers Hall. "There's apathy in the labor movement," a member of his union agreed.

Les Johnson, president of UAW Local 1714 at the Lordstown, Ohio, General Motors Fisher Body plant, was more to the point when he complained after one of Kirkland's meetings that union members were too involved in strike activities against GM to pay much attention to the presidential campaign.

### Democratic Party mediators

Working people were not apathetic in 1984 when they were forced out on strike. Greyhound bus drivers, Las Vegas hotel workers, Arizona copper miners, Toledo auto parts workers, and thousands of other trade unionists battled goons, scabs, and cops in order to save their jobs and their unions. But the militancy of most of these workers was squandered in behind-doors compromises worked out by international and local union officials with the connivance of Democratic Party "mediators."

For years, labor leaders have consciously demobilized the union membership in order to safeguard their own

power and privileges. One sure method of operation—in times past—was to obtain "favors" in return for union patronage of supposed friends in the Democratic Party. But these favors merely reflected the concessions that the organized strength of the workers was able to force from the employers.

Now that the economy is weaker, politicians are more openly inclined to grant "favors" to the capitalist class—with the full force of their courts, cops, and legislatures. Many workers see the annual political action campaigns as a waste of union funds. Union officials can no longer get out the vote for politicians that give nothing in return; they have *themselves* lost influence with the ranks because of their policy of reliance on the Democratic Party instead of their own membership.

Millions of dollars from trade union treasuries were lavished on electing the man who, along with Jimmy Carter, headed a government that organized the capitalist takeback campaign that laid the ground for Reagan. Working people remained uninspired by Mondale's lackluster commitment to "decency, justice, and compassion."

Many undoubtedly agreed with James Spivey, a Black auto worker from Detroit, who told the *New York Times*, "I haven't worked since Reagan's been in office, but I was laid off under Carter. Since then, my view has been that presidents come and presidents go. I'll vote for Mondale, but I don't see much reason to."

### Reagan's "mandate"

Only about 53% of the voting age population bothered to vote at all. Reagan was elected by about 31% of the eligible electorate, up from 27% four years ago, but hardly an "historic mandate."

The day after Reagan's election

hoopla, while celebrating supporters were long in bed and janitors swept up the confetti, the president's "historic mandate" seemed worth considerably less. The morning newspapers screamed war threats against Nicaragua, and analysts pointed out that the economic troubles of the United States had not disappeared in the night.

While Reagan tries to reassure us that "the people are in charge," his administration is attempting to slash more social programs. Medicare and Medicaid, veterans' health benefits, civil service retirement benefits, and loans to small businesses and farmers are next on the cutting board. With very few exceptions, the Democratic Party—which retained its majority in the House of Representatives—is offering only a whisper of protest to the impending cuts. The Democrats did not lose the election. Working people did. ■

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**Due to the year-end holidays the January issue of Socialist Action will be 12 pages**



(The following is an abridged translation of an article which appeared in the September 1984 issue of *Critique Communiste*, the monthly theoretical journal of the *Ligue Communiste Revolutionnaire*, French section of the *Fourth International*.)

The financial crisis of the world economy is upon us. All the analysts, from *The Economist* of London to *Expansion* [France], are frightened. *The Economist* recently produced an editorial in which it described the dramatic consequences of a financial crash: increased unemployment, successive bankruptcies, and destruction comparable to that of a war. In short, a vision of the end of the world.

It was the imminent failure of Continental Illinois (the seventh largest U.S. bank) that brought the crisis to the fore. The process that led to its near-failure is worth taking note of because it can be repeated.

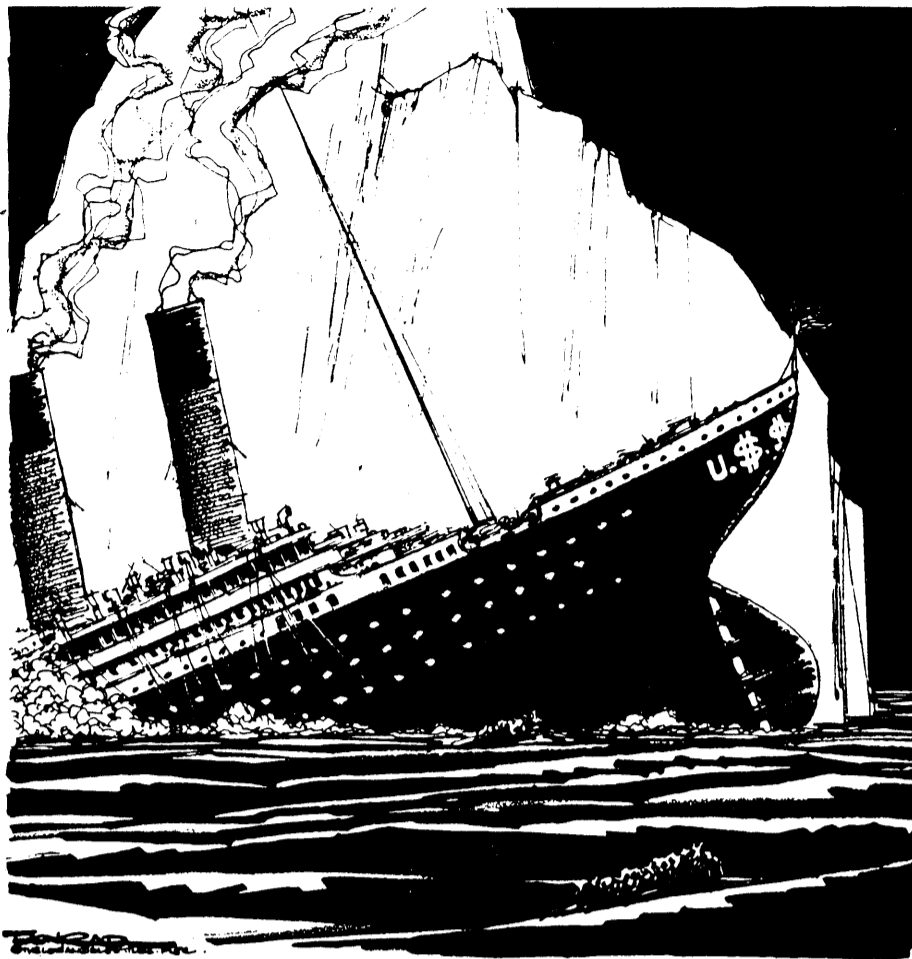
Continental's dealings in Latin America are limited, but it has interests in the sagging U.S. petroleum industry. Some of Continental's largest depositors are in the venture of "floating capital," i.e. speculative capital seeking the highest rate of return. These are the kind of depositors who, if they sensed that Continental might have difficulties collecting on its loans, would withdraw their capital.

Now, everyone knows that a bank does not keep the money it borrows in its coffers. Its goal is to make a profit by lending money out at a higher rate than that at which it was borrowed. Because of this, Continental, like any bank in its position, cannot repay the sums that have been deposited with it. This is all the more true since it is often a question of long-term loans for which the bank cannot demand immediate repayment.

If the bank were to do so, it would provoke the bankruptcy of its debtor. The risk can be easily seen. And the American authorities have also seen it. In order to avoid a string of bankruptcies, they have flown to the aid of Continental to prevent it from going under. They have lent it—the term "given" would no doubt be more accurate—\$7.5 billion. It is the largest amount ever lent to a bank. This shows how close the financial system was to collapsing.

It is important to stress the fact that the rate of bank failures in the United States is greater today than at any time in this nation's history. And although up until now "only" the small banks

# Bank crisis raises specter of 1929



"This is the captain speaking: Big banks and thrifts first! Everyone else will join in a chorus of 'Nearer, my God, to thee' . . ."

have gone bankrupt, it is evident that the closing of the seventh largest U.S. bank would have had important international consequences, provoking a snowball effect. The U.S. government has preferred to "socialize" the losses. According to the July 21, 1984, issue of *Liberation*, the U.S. government even considered nationalizing this bank in order to provide the funds necessary for its survival. . . .

And today there are many events that can provoke a financial panic. This is all the more likely since "floating capital" is very sensitive to conjunctural changes, with millions of dollars being withdrawn rapidly and all at once. The problem of the debt has become the number one problem for the leaders of the capitalist world. . . .

One aspect of the present financial crisis is the severe tension on the world's money markets provoked by the rising

U.S. interest rates. These rates have risen on account of three factors:

- The "uncertainty about the future."  
In capitalist terms what this means is that the "profitability" of new investments is uncertain.
- The demand for dollars is greater than the supply. This results from the huge dollar debt owed to the United States by multinational corporations and nation states. It also results from the internal U.S. debt—primarily the budget deficit estimated at \$190 billion.
- The limit on the supply of dollars reinforced by the restrictive policies of the Federal Reserve Board—even though, since 1982, the restrictions have eased up a bit.

Indeed, capital from around the world has been funneled into the United States, attracted by the rising U.S. inter-

est rates and the fact that the United States represents a haven of sorts. This has permitted the U.S. government to finance its budget deficit. As the July 14 issue of *The Economist* notes, the boom in the U.S. economy is strongly linked to the influx of foreign capital. At the same time, this increased demand for dollars is at the root of the increased value of the U.S. dollar on the foreign-exchange markets. . . .

## Looming financial collapse

The United States, the citadel of imperialism, is also experiencing an increase in its level of indebtedness. And it is the rising debt which has "doped" the recovery of the U.S. economy. But paradoxically, it is in this country that the risks of a financial crash are the most real. In the United States, the private corporations, like the government, are heavily in debt.

The reason for the U.S. budget deficit is the enormous increase in military spending, which has reached the level of \$300 billion, while spending for social programs has been drastically cut back. These military expenditures have permitted the creation of substitute markets for all the large U.S. corporations.

It must be stressed that this recovery [1983-1984] does not resemble that of 1976. In fact, the renewed growth in the economy has been accompanied by an increase in industrial and bank failures. The creation of jobs should not deceive us: It is a question of temporary employment, or of workers rehired at lower salaries than they had previously earned. It must also be emphasized that for the U.S. working class purchasing power has decreased and the rate of exploitation has increased. This explains why the capitalists prefer to invest in the United States.

The hike in interest rates indicates that the demand for credit inside the United States is very great and that a lowering of the rates is inconceivable in the short term. In fact, a continued increase in the interest rates is the most probable scenario. The U.S. banks have already raised their "prime rates," i.e. the rates reserved to their preferred clients. And this is so because the recovery has been rooted in an unparalleled growth of indebtedness.

This 1983-84 recovery has amassed new contradictions which can transform the next recession—predicted for 1985—into a *depression*. Such a situation would result from the convergence of a recession with the financial crisis.

The financial crisis is unavoidable. It is written into the growth of the "debt economy."

And it will occur even though temporary solutions—all of which will only mean an increased socialization of the debt—may delay the day of reckoning. And it is not the least of the paradoxes to see the current U.S. administration—so proud of its "free market" image—considering nationalizing the Continental Illinois bank. . . .

The financial crisis is indeed the final solution for capitalism because the destruction of capital, by bank and industrial failures, would provide a solution to the problem of the debt. But the barbarous risks inherent in this "solution" are enormous. They are already present in the underdeveloped countries. And it is precisely the risks of capitalism's ultimate solution to its crisis—barbarism—which underlines the necessity, for all of humanity, to break with the crazy logic of capitalism. ■

## Canadian Trotskyists meet:

# Alliance for Socialist Action founded

By BARRY WEISLEDER

WINNIPEG, Canada—The socialist movement in English Canada took a major step toward its revitalization with the formation of the Alliance for Socialist Action (ASA) at a conference held in Winnipeg, Manitoba, on Nov. 9-11, 1984. The ASA was formed on the basis of the program of the Fourth International, the world Trotskyist movement.

Participants from 11 cities, spanning six provinces and the Northwest Territories converged on the western capital. Unaffiliated individual activists came together with representatives of the groups that sponsored the conference—the Socialist Workers Collection of Toronto; Socialist Action Collective of Winnipeg, Manitoba; Socialist Challenge Organization of Edmonton, Alberta; and the Socialist Action Collective of Vancouver, British Columbia. Each collective will retain its public identity within the framework of the Alliance.

Also in attendance were observers from the Quebec-based *Gauche Socialiste* and two U.S. fraternal

organizations, Socialist Action and the Fourth Internationalist Tendency.

### A gathering of activists

The conference brought together militants, young and old, women and men, who are local leaders in today's movements for social change across English Canada. It was a gathering of active trade unionists, feminists, gays, students, youth, antiwar activists, left-wing New Democrats, and members of Central America and Eastern Europe solidarity committees.

Conference participants recognized the need for an unhurried and thorough discussion of the political situation in Canada and the tasks facing socialists today. A public bulletin will be published to serve as a forum for discussion—as well as a vehicle for ASA campaigns.

Within six months the newly elected National Steering Committee will meet to evaluate the progress of the internal discussion and to consider the scheduling of a convention both to vote on resolutions and to found a united, democratic-centralist, revolutionary socialist organization. Central to the ASA's perspective is the construction of such an

organization on a Pan-Canadian scale in conjunction with the members of *Gauche Socialiste*.

The Winnipeg conference adopted as a political priority the building of a mass-action-oriented movement to oppose U.S. military intervention and Canadian complicity in Central America and the Caribbean. In collaboration with our American co-thinkers, Alliance members will be working to build an international day of protest in April against the war policies of Washington and Ottawa.

The conference hailed the Toronto jury acquittal of Doctors Morgenthau, Smoling, and Scott, who were charged with "conspiracy to procure an abortion."

The now-strengthened fight for free-standing abortion clinics and repeal of the restrictive federal abortion law will be a major preoccupation of socialists and feminists in preparation for International Women's Day.

The gathering ended on a note of celebration. Following the third ballot selection of the name for the new organization—the Alliance for Socialist Action—the meeting burst into applause. ■

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By DANIEL WEBERN

BOSTON—At the same moment that the press declared Reagan's "right-wing landslide," nearly 70 percent of the voters in the greater Boston area approved a referendum that condemned U.S. military involvement in Central America. Despite a blackout in the major newspapers, the referendum won in every representative district in which it was on the ballot—including relatively conservative areas like South Boston. It won by 10-1 in Cambridge and in the Black neighborhoods of Boston.

The "non-binding policy" resolution called for the immediate withdrawal of all U.S. troops and advisers from El Salvador and Honduras and an end to all military aid to El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, and the Nicaraguan *contras*.

Planning for the referendum was begun last spring by members of the Boston Central America Solidarity Association (CASA). We were inspired by the successful ballot initiative sponsored by the San Francisco Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador in November 1983. Many of us believed that—regardless of the size of the final vote—the referendum would provide an opportunity to give information about the war in Central America to large numbers of people.

We decided to set up a steering committee to coordinate our work. We wanted the committee to include people with the broadest possible range of views, and agreed it would give no endorsement to any political candidate. At first we found few volunteers willing to spend hours in the streets collecting signatures to place the referendum on the ballot. But the response of the thousands who agreed to sign the petition lifted our spirits, and the referendum was put on the ballot in virtually all of the representative districts of the area.

Many new people joined our movement after the successful petitioning. We rented an office and began the second phase of our campaign—that of education and outreach. People listened to us when we told them, "This referen-

# Referendum campaign spurs Boston antiwar movement

dum will be on the ballot in November. You will want to make up your mind how to vote. We'd like to give you some information on what is going on."

The referendum campaign has transformed the Boston antiwar movement. We built a grassroots network that is many times larger than the circle that the traditional solidarity groups had been able to reach. It is unfortunate that the Socialist Workers Party refused to build the campaign (calling it 'petty bourgeois') and called for abstention on the vote. But many other participants have become convinced of the necessity for mass actions to build on the momentum generated by the referendum. Accordingly, a conference has been called for Dec. 15 in Boston in order to plan demonstrations and other activities protesting U.S. intervention in Central America. ■



Socialist Action/May May Gong

Al Lannon, president of the Longshore and Warehousemen's Union, Local 6, speaks to "U.S. Out Now" teach-in at San Francisco State University on Nov. 28. The meeting was sponsored by various campus organizations, including Students for Socialist Action.

## ... Labor enlist

(continued from page 1)

commended a reversal of a previous decision to exclude the People's Antiwar Mobilization (PAM) from representation on its national steering committee.

Although PAM has organized several large antiwar protests, an earlier coalition meeting accused them of "being an untrustworthy partner in the coalition process". Rejecting this exclusion will strengthen the coalition's ability to unite broad forces for the national demonstrations it has called on April 13 for Washington, D.C., San Francisco, Los Angeles, Seattle, and Denver.

There are also indications that this national coalition will agree to expand its steering committee to include representatives from local coalitions building the spring actions. Gus Newport, mayor of Berkeley, and Al Lannon, president of International Longshore and Warehouse Union local 6 (ILWU), have both indicated that they will raise this issue at the Nov. 29 coalition meeting. Lannon is a member of the International Executive Board of the ILWU, which has fully endorsed the spring actions.

One example of what can be done nationally is the initiative taken by leading unionists to build a broad coalition for the April 13 antiwar demonstration in San Francisco. Meeting on Nov. 12, a wide range of peace, religious, and union leaders formed an organizing

committee for a Spring Peace Mobilization and elected a temporary coordinating committee. Al Lannon and two other leading unionists; Charlene Tschirhart, the director of the San Francisco Freeze; the Rev. Howard Gloyd, the head of the Rainbow Coalition; and John Moyer, the director of the San Francisco Ecumenical Council, have all agreed to serve on this 10-person committee.

Most of the unionists first became involved in this effort when they supported the Emergency National Conference, which was held in Cleveland, Ohio, on Sept. 14-16. By assuring the labor movement of a major decision-making role from the beginning and by focusing the April 13 demonstration on opposition to the war danger in Central America, the emerging Bay Area coalition has received unprecedented labor participation. The ILWU has contributed office space and equipment. Most of the local and statewide labor bodies are also expected to support the spring action.

Pledging its commitment to building

a unified coalition involving all the anti-intervention forces, the Bay Area organizing committee has patterned its four slogans after those previously adopted by the national coalition. These slogans are the following: Oppose U.S. Intervention in Central America and the Caribbean; Freeze and Reverse the Nuclear Arms Race; Jobs and Justice, Not War; and End U.S. Support for South Africa Apartheid.

Growing involvement in the peace movement by labor is a sign of the deep opposition to Washington's war plans. During the Vietnam war, the mass mobilization of antiwar sentiment was one of the decisive factors that forced the Nixon administration to withdraw U.S. troops.

The ruling rich in this country understand the need to reverse the so-called Vietnam Syndrome for the war drive to succeed. Building local coalitions with heavy labor participation—like the one in San Francisco—can once again force a government of warmakers to retreat. ■

## "U.S. hands off Nicaragua"

By MIKE ZUKOWSKI

MINNEAPOLIS—"U.S. hands off Nicaragua," was the theme of the day as 1300 people gathered at the old Federal Building in Minneapolis on Nov. 10 to protest U.S. military intervention in Central America and the Caribbean. Protesters carried signs, chanted, and sang while they circled the building in freezing temperatures. The demonstration was organized by the Central America Week Coalition, a broad-based organization of peace, solidarity, religious, student, and labor groups and activists in the Twin Cities Area.

"The increased provocations against Nicaragua represent an escalation of the U.S. war in Central America," a member of the coalition told the crowd during a brief rally. "They must be met by a step-up in the efforts of the antiwar movement. We all know this rally is great, but our work doesn't stop here."

Organizers then mapped out plans for further actions, including a picket line on Nov. 12 to protest CIA recruiting on campuses, a march on Dec. 2 to commemorate the killing of the church women four years ago in El Salvador, and the national spring mobilization on April 13.

The call for the Nov. 10 demonstration came from the action proposal passed at the Emergency National Conference on Central America and the Caribbean held Sept. 14-16 in Cleveland. The protest was much larger than expected due to the increased U.S. prov-

ocations against the Nicaraguan government over the unloading of Soviet ships in Corinto harbor. ■

## Angry crowd at Federal Building

By JOEL HOUTMAN

LOS ANGELES—An angry crowd of 1000 gathered Nov. 10 at the Federal Building in Westwood to protest U.S. intervention in Central America. The picket line was built on short notice in response to escalating war moves by the Reagan administration.

The crowd grew so large that picket lines were set up on both sides of busy Wilshire Boulevard. The protesters chanted "CIA out of Nicaragua," "No pasaran," and "Stop the bombing—stop the war."

Bystanders and motorists were overwhelmingly friendly—waving and honking their horns in support.

After picketing for several hours, a brief unscheduled rally was held, chaired by Don White, leader of the Echo Park chapter of the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES). White said that the rally was the result of a united effort by the Los Angeles Coalition for Peace and Justice, the Cleveland Emergency National Conference Continuations Committee, and CISPES. A representative of Casa Nicaragua expressed thanks to the crowd from the people of Nicaragua. ■

## Canadians plan antiwar coalition

By BARRY WEISLEDER

TORONTO—A movement against U.S. military intervention in Central America and the Caribbean is developing in Canada. Antiwar activity is growing in spite of the open defense of U.S. policies by the newly elected Conservative federal government.

A conference to found a broad, democratic anti-intervention coalition will be held on Dec. 8 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Hart House on the University of Toronto's downtown campus. The conference was initiated by radical Christian activists, trade unionists, socialists, and representatives of the FDR/FMLN of El Salvador. Numerous groups and individuals—from as far away as Montreal and Ottawa—are planning to attend.

The conference agenda includes a proposal for a week of activities in April 1985 to protest the U.S. war drive and Canadian complicity. These activities will hopefully coincide with a mass international day of protest against Washington's policies in Central America and the Caribbean. ■



Socialist Action/May May Gong

1000 protest Casper Weinberger's visit to San Francisco on Nov. 8.



# Conservative county condemns Reagan saber-rattling

By SUSAN ANN SCOTT

OLYMPIA, Wash.—Polls all across America have shown that despite President Ronald Reagan's handy defeat of his Democratic challengers, the majority of Americans do not support his stand on most issues. While those who put their hopes in the Mondale-Ferraro ticket for Nov. 6 were depressed by the results of the election, communities that found a way to let the people vote on the actual issues had good reason to be encouraged.

In Washington state, for example, a measure to prohibit state funding of abortions was defeated by a vote of 856,670 to 743,442. And in Thurston County a referendum in favor of ending U.S. intervention in Nicaragua and El Salvador—Proposition 1—passed by 30,660 to 21,021. Although Thurston County voters favored Reagan over Mondale by 30,758 to 24,216, at least 20 percent of those preferring Reagan voted unambiguously against his policy in Central America.

## Thurston County

Thurston County comprises a predominantly rural area, with a large population of active and retired military personnel. Though the voters approved a nuclear-freeze resolution in 1982, the county has a reputation for conservatism, and its largest city, Olympia, narrowly defeated a proposal to fluoridate the water in the same election. The outcome of the anti-intervention measure, then, was by no means a foregone conclusion.

But Olympia has also had for some years a strong group called the Central American Action Committee. A num-



ber of key activists in the group decided that the election offered an opportunity for even broader-based campaigns and that the time had come to reach out to more people.

Anna Schlecht, one of the main organizers, said: "Putting the issue on the local ballot was a way to educate the general public and to make the problem a subject for dinner-time conversation."

In addition, organizers felt that a non-partisan campaign on a clear-cut issue would be a positive alternative to the prospect of having individuals throw themselves into the campaigns of various candidates.

After an aggressive and successful campaign to gather signatures in favor of putting the proposition on the ballot,

organizers presented the measure to the county commissioners at an open meeting. Testifying in support of the measure were a representative of the State Employees Union, Local 443, the county's largest union, and several church and community leaders.

Organizers pointed out to county officials that each taxpayer in the county pays approximately \$1000 a year to support military spending and an additional \$400 a year for the national debt, which essentially props up the defense budget. They explained that the deep depression in the fishing and timber industries were related to high interest rates and militaristic priorities and warned as well of the very real threat that the draft might be reinstated. The commissioners agreed to put the propo-

sition on the ballot, and the major campaign began.

Committee members visited local churches, campuses, women's groups, and political parties to recruit volunteers. They attracted the endorsements of a wide range of organizations and individuals, including prominent Democrats, but were careful not to associate the issue with any particular party.

At one well-attended rally, for example, Congressman Don Bonker spoke in support of the proposition but urged people to "give Duarte a chance."

On the other hand, another speaker, Stephanie Coontz, blasted the sham elections in El Salvador and insisted that U.S. crimes in Central America were part of a bipartisan foreign policy that no politician was going to end. She maintained that it would take the personal involvement of ordinary people in a massive, independent antiwar movement.

## Newspaper endorses

Every urban district and almost every rural one in the county was canvassed by volunteers, who went door to door with informational material. Yard signs appeared everywhere. And to the surprise of nearly every political observer in the area, the local newspaper decided to endorse the referendum after interviewing proposition organizers. *The Olympian's* editorial utilized much of the information provided by the committee while drawing as well on its own research. The editorial was also reprinted and distributed door to door.

On the night of the election the striking difference between Thurston County and other Washington counties was the number of antiwar activists who felt invigorated rather than depressed. As one organizer commented: "Unlike those who threw their eggs into the Mondale-Ferraro basket, we have come out of this election with something to build upon, something to be proud of. Our victory... shows what an independent organization can do when it has people who are willing to work on the issues."

## THE MILITANT

As a member of the Emergency National Conference Continuations Committee, I received the following letter in a mailing. I feel it is important to respond to distortions and misinformation which stand in the way of achieving unity in the anti-intervention movement. Therefore, in the interest of setting the record straight, I have asked Socialist Action to publish Jerry Gordon and Jim Lafferty's Oct. 30 letter to *The Militant*.—Carl Finamore

To the Editor of *The Militant*:

This letter is being written in response to *The Militant's* account of the Emergency National Conference Against U.S. Military Intervention in Central America/the Caribbean, held in Cleveland, Sept. 14-16, 1984.

Our starting point has to do with a meeting held in Washington, D.C., a little more than a month after the Cleveland conference. On Oct. 23, representatives of national peace, anti-intervention, antinuclear, religious, labor, and other groups at the meeting voted to sponsor a march on Washington, D.C. (and West Coast cities to be named later) on Saturday, April 13, 1985. The demonstrations will be held to support four themes: an immediate end to U.S. intervention in Central America and the Caribbean; opposition to the nuclear arms race; money for jobs and human needs, not war; and opposition to apartheid. Representatives of the Continuations Committee of the Emergency National Conference were present and participated in the meeting.

The Oct. 23 meeting initiated two historic firsts. April 13 will mark the first time that virtually the entire anti-intervention movement has come together to sponsor a national demonstration against U.S. intervention in Central America and the Caribbean. This will also be the first time that the anti-intervention and antinuclear movements have joined forces in calling for a national demonstration. These were the twin goals of the Emergency National Conference.

### Role of *The Militant*

Now what has been the role of *The Militant* in all this?

Your article (Oct. 12, 1984) on the Emergency National Conference was a crude distortion from beginning to end. The article, both in substance and tone, was implacably hostile to the conference, which after all was called to help forge the broadest possible unity and to mount urgently needed massive demonstrations against U.S. interventionist actions.

The thrust of *The Militant's* article was to portray the Emergency National Conference as small, narrow, and inconsequen-

## A response to *The Militant*

tial. To make your theme appear credible, you took gross liberties with the truth.

Instead of reporting the fact that the conference had over 150 labor sponsors and endorsers, you reduced the number to "several" who "initially endorsed" it. (Since the complete list of labor sponsors and endorsers was distributed in the registration kits, your figure cannot be attributed to journalistic sloppiness or ignorance.)

Instead of reporting that 650 people registered for the conference—articles in both the *Akron Beacon Journal* and *The Guardian*, written by reporters who attended the conference, said there were over 600 people present—*The Militant* told its readers that only "some 300" attended.

Instead of reporting that hundreds of anti-intervention activists came to Cleveland from the ranks of labor, solidarity networks, peace groups, religious organizations, the women's rights movement, senior citizens, the campuses, and other constituencies to conduct a serious discussion on a program to combat U.S. war actions in Central America and the Caribbean, *The Militant* article ignored this and instead carped about supposed busloads of people which you say the organizers "promised" and which did not materialize. You also claim that "support for the gathering faded as it drew closer."

These statements are false to the core.

The fact of the matter is that the closer we got to the conference, the more rapidly it built. Some of the most significant endorsements—especially from the labor movement—came shortly before the conference began; the speakers' list broadened perceptibly; and the number of pre-conference registrations climbed substantially. Conference organizers, *The Militant* notwithstanding, never "promised busloads," or a specific attendance, or anything else. We did our best to bring people together to plan united actions at a time of acute crisis and that was what we succeeded in doing.

### Tragic baiting attacks

The most reprehensible part of *The Militant's* article on the conference is the roll call you took of particular radical groups present which you say played "the major role."

We became accustomed to this kind of journalism during the

Vietnam antiwar movement in articles by Evans and Novak, and in "exposes" by the House Committee on Un-American Activities (then called by a different name) and the FBI. How tragic to read baiting attacks of a similar vein now appearing in *The Militant*.

The fact is that there were hundreds of independent activists at the Emergency National Conference coming from scores of unions (a number were elected officials), peace groups, and anti-interventionist organizations. If any group played "the major role," it was they.

A total of 175 trade unionists attended the conference. Not only was this first national conference against U.S. military intervention in Central America and the Caribbean several times larger than the first national conference against the Vietnam War, but it is clear that we are light-years ahead in involving trade unionists.

To be sure, some major anti-interventionist forces both within and without the labor movement were not represented at the Cleveland conference. For that reason, the conference did not issue a call for nationwide demonstrations (as *The Militant* article also mistakenly reported) but adopted a *proposal for action* to be brought to the rest of the anti-intervention movement in an attempt to get united agreement.

The Oct. 23 meeting in Washington, D.C., confirmed the correctness of this approach. Together with national groups such as CISPES, CALC, SANE, MOBE, WILPF, Nuclear Freeze, and a host of others who were pursuing a parallel course, a unification of the movement has occurred in support of the April 13 demonstrations. Certainly this will be welcomed by the people who have the most at stake: those under the gun in Central America and the Caribbean.

### Unity around April 13

Yet *The Militant*, almost alone, has up to this point remained outside the unification process, not even reporting its development in your Oct. 12 issue, though it was discussed and agreed to at the Cleveland conference.

It is of course your right to select what you report. But it is also the right of others to object to the irresponsible distortions, misrepresentations, and baiting attacks you print in your paper. You ought to get your facts straight and quit conducting yourselves in a blindly factional and sectarian manner.

*The Militant* should have learned something from its disastrous 1981 experience when it shamelessly violence-baited the anti-intervention demonstration held in May of that year, also attacked it as being too narrowly sponsored, and in effect urged people not to build it or attend it. In spite of your dire warnings, 100,000 people turned out in a peaceful demonstration, the largest anti-intervention mobilization on Central America to date.

April 13 is a date that everyone in the anti-intervention movement should unite around. Experience proves that once movement activists unite and agree—and put the negativism and factionalism aside—it becomes possible to galvanize into action ever broader sections of the population. The potential for a big turnout on April 13 is certainly there. We hope *The Militant* will join in building it. But if you choose to do no more than report on the event, let us hope you will at least do so with journalistic integrity.

Jerry Gordon, Coordinator  
Jim Lafferty, Conference Organizer and Member, Continuations Committee

# TEAMSTERS FOR A DEMOCRATIC UNION



Fighting for Better Working Conditions. Wives of Local 429 McLean members protesting management's harassment of dockworkers.

CHICAGO—"Save Our Contract, Rebuild Our Union" was the theme of the Teamsters for a Democratic Union (TDU) convention held here Oct. 13-15. Over 450 teamsters gathered to listen to speakers and attend workshops on organizing the fight for a better contract, union democracy, and a stronger union.

While speakers and participants painted a sober picture of the situation facing teamsters today, they also lauded the recent successes of TDU in loosening president Jackie Presser's iron grip on the International Brotherhood of Teamsters (IBT). These mark a turning point for the largest rank-and-file movement in the unions today.

TDU was organized over nine years ago to address the crying need for democracy in the union. Today it has over 8000 members and is growing. It is organized, as its Rank-and-File Bill of Rights says, to fight for the direct election of international officers, business agents, and stewards; for a majority vote to ratify a contract instead of the 2/3 majority now required; for a five-day 40-hour week; for decent contracts and pensions; and for equal pay for equal work, equality among teamsters, and an end to discrimination.

### Teamsters under attack

Teamsters, like other workers, are on the defensive against employer attacks. The last few years have seen a decline in employment—100,000 teamsters in trucking and warehousing are out of work. Teamster membership, 2.2 million a few years ago, now stands at 1.9 million. The goal of the trucking companies is to ultimately break up the National Master Freight Agreement (NMFA), the national agreement between the Teamsters and the Trucking Management Incorporated (TMI—the employers' association).

In 1982, concessions were exacted from the union with little resistance by the international leadership. Wage freezes were instituted and cost-of-living adjustments were virtually eliminated. Many companies, using threats of competition from other truckers, other branches of the same company, and the railroads, succeeded in winning further local concessions.

In some local areas, such as Pennsylvania, relief riders established two-tier wage scales and permitted the expansion of the use of nonunion workers. This last provision allowed companies to divert work to nonunion owner-operators and brokers, to use "double-breasting" (setting up nonunion dummy companies), and to use "casuals"—supposedly temporary workers who are never granted union rights and seniority. According to *Business Week*, 20 percent of teamster truckers are working at "informally" negotiated rates 10 to 15 percent below national levels.

### TDU defeats Presser maneuvers

A year ago, due in large part to the organizing efforts of TDU, union members blocked the attempt of the TMI and Presser to reopen the Master Freight Agreement and grant more concessions. They voted down a relief rider by a whopping 88 percent.

This year Presser wanted to avoid another embarrassing defeat when he tried to railroad through a secretly negotiated contract with the United Parcel Service (UPS). He was blocked again when TDU mobilized the UPS ranks against the proposal. The contract did eventually pass, but TDU reasserted the membership's right to discuss the contract. (See the article in the October 1984 *Socialist Action*.) These two challenges to Presser set the stage for the current round of contract talks.

The NMFA expires in April 1985, but the Teamsters and the TMI have already asked for early talks. The employers' association itself is fragmented and has been taken over by the four largest companies—the "big four"—Roadway,

Ryder-PIE, Consolidated Freight, and Yellow. Thus it represents only the largest and most profitable companies—Roadway made \$99 million in profits last year; Consolidated Freight made \$56 million.

By all indications, the TMI wants a UPS-type agreement. In exchange for a one-time cash bonus, they seek to establish a national two-tier wage scale, expand the use of nonunion workers, and change what they call "unproductive" work rules. In addition, many small companies, talking poor, are for opting out of the national agreement altogether, hoping to cut an even better side deal. Only 29 companies—down from 125 for the last contract—have agreed to be represented by the TMI. And it seems likely that the international union will go along with this dismemberment.

TDU is mounting an aggressive campaign to mobilize the membership to defend the national agreement. It has been getting out information in contract bulletins, encouraging teamsters to go to their union meetings to discuss the contract, and distributing *Convoy Dispatch*. The two recent victories of TDU have already put Presser and the companies on notice that they will encounter some resistance to their plans.

### Cannery workers

The national contracts for carhaulers, tankhaulers, and cannery workers also come due this year. The Master Cannery Contract is the third largest contract for the Teamsters, covering some 50,000 workers. Management has indicated that it will seek to extend the concessions imposed in 1982—a wage freeze and a two-tier scale. The previous concessions, which were supposed to guarantee jobs, didn't prevent the collapse of one major company, Cal-can, and the loss of 9000 jobs.

Some speakers at the convention addressed the need to intensify organizing efforts into non-trucking areas. While TDU is open to all teamsters, its strength lies in trucking and related industry—also traditionally the stronghold of the union. But the New York members, among others, pointed out that truckers constitute a smaller and smaller percentage of the IBT. In Chicago, for example, out of 100,000 teamsters, only 25,000 are truckers. Presser has indicated that the IBT will give up organizing truckers because "it's too difficult."

In order to democratize the Teamsters union, according to some speakers, it is in the interest of TDU to reach out to teamsters in production, cannery, and

other work places—to the sectors that are generally lower paid and where minorities and women work in large numbers. Without this approach, they said, TDU will not be able to reach its goals.

### Brainstorming locals

In the workshops and in the discussion on the floor, members at the convention talked about the work local chapters had done and the fights in which they had been involved. Several workshops dealt with such practical questions as the role of stewards; safety and health issues; and how to build TDU chapters, participate in union meetings, and run for union office. Others discussed labor history, redbaiting, and discrimination against minorities and women.

A member from California described TDU efforts at National Preserves to defend cannery workers against the management and "La Migra," the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS). After one teamster was fired as

an undocumented worker, the cannery demanded that all workers produce proof of citizenship. TDU and the Cannery Workers Committee mobilized support for the workers in the union and in the community to oppose this victimization, asserting that the cannery had neither the right nor the obligation to let the INS into the plant. The workers forced the INS to back off and, as a result of the struggle, a San Jose chapter of TDU was formed.

In New York TDU has been fighting a freight company's use of double-breasting to discriminate against Latino teamsters. Spear Trucking set up a dummy company to avoid giving union rights and wages to some of its workers. TDU took up the cause of four teamsters, campaigning to make the case known and winning favorable decisions from the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB). The case was a clear-cut example of a company's racist practices—unopposed by the union officials—being used to undermine the union.

### A labor party

The need for a labor party was raised, as it traditionally has been in TDU. Some speakers argued that the issues facing working people—from deregulation and unemployment to U.S. intervention in Central America—cannot be answered solely by contract fights.

It is well known in the Teamsters union that Presser endorsed Reagan's re-election to escape a court indictment. Some locals, including Local 743, the largest Teamster local, and their officers opposed this and supported Mondale. Unfortunately, TDU has been unable to intervene in this ferment to offer a way to organize labor in its own interest on the political level, separate from the bosses' parties.

On another front, between 200 and 400 teamsters organized by the international union picketed the convention in the name of B.L.A.S.T.—Presser's own goon squad. They picketed with signs claiming, among other slanders, that TDU was antiunion. They were unable, however, to disrupt the proceedings, as they had done at the previous TDU convention.

The TDU convention offered participants and observers an encouraging picture of the potential of rank-and-file workers. The long and patient efforts to organize a rank-and-file movement are clearly showing results. ■

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## The unfinished Chinese revolution

*The October 1984 plenum of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) marked an important deepening in the course toward capitalist restoration undertaken by the reform faction of Deng Xiaoping. In the boldest move since the party reinstated individual farming in 1978, the CCP decided to heavily curtail central planning by allowing approximately one million state-run enterprises to compete for survival in the growing parallel market system. At the same time, state price subsidies were drastically reduced.*

*Chinese officials declared that the "Reform of the Economic Structure" measures "will affect 200 million people in the cities" and "complete the economic transformation by doing for industry what the 1978 measures did for agriculture."*

*Western diplomats applauded the October decree. One declared, "This is the first step in a very exciting direction. If they don't trip and fall, the Soviet model is dead in China."*

*In this issue of Forum, Ralph Schoenman examines the origins of the CCP's current policies and underlines the mounting tension and inequities stemming from the course embarked upon by the CCP under the helm of Deng Xiaoping. Schoenman pays major attention to the Special Economic Zones (SEZ), which are a limited version of what the October reform measures intend to apply on a national level. His study of the SEZ's provides great insight into the sharp economic contradictions and political confrontations that can be expected in China in the coming years.*

*Schoenman has visited China on numerous occasions and has written extensively on this subject. In 1965, after witnessing the Indonesian coup, he left with the Chinese mission for Peking, where he remained for a brief period.—THE EDITORS*

By RALPH SCHOENMAN

The public perception of the Chinese revolution, particularly in the West and notably among the left, has a curious dimension. There is little if any correspondence between the actual theory and practice of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP)—both before assuming power and after—and the way in which the party's role has been discussed within socialist circles abroad.

Part of this curious romance between left public opinion abroad and the CCP has been the acceptance at face value of the version of that party's history which it has chosen to present.

The Long March, to take an extreme example, served throughout the period of radicalization in the United States as

a model of revolutionary strategy and a symbol of the perspicacity and extraordinary leadership of Mao Tse-tung.

The Long March began in southern Kiangsi after encircling attacks by the Kuomintang forces of Chiang Kai-shek had forced Mao's troops to abandon millions of peasants in Kiangsi, Fukien, Anhwei, and Hupeh. The repression which followed took nearly 500,000 lives.

Of the 300,000 people who began the Long March, only 30,000 remained alive when the march ended one year later in Yen-an. Ninety percent had been killed.

This was a calamitous defeat, the seeds of which had been sown in the Chinese revolution of 1927. The Chinese party abandoned its independent

organization to enter the Kuomintang, only to be turned upon and slaughtered by Chiang.

Yet within a year of the Long March, this same leadership was still pursuing the policies laid down by Stalin, this time at the Seventh World Congress of the Comintern, when the line of the popular front was declared.

After Chiang's own junior officers captured him and wanted to execute him for failing to resist the Japanese attack on Manchuria, Chou En-lai negotiated the release of Chiang as the party leadership again sought to subordinate itself to the Kuomintang. Mao and his colleagues appealed to Chiang "to lead the struggle against Japan" and, in exchange, undertook to abolish the Red Army, the "soviets," and the agrarian revolution.

### Coalition government

As late as three months before the collapse of Chiang's armies, Mao had sought to persuade him again to enter into an alliance. Literally weeks before the third Chinese revolution assumed power on Oct. 1, 1949, the Mao leadership had attempted to share this power with Chiang. But the disintegration of the army of the Kuomintang did not prevent Mao from setting up the Consultative Conference to organize a "coalition government of four classes."

Bourgeois property was preserved and the land reform was postponed.

The declared purpose of this coalition government was to persuade the United States that Mao Tse-tung's "New Democracy" could satisfy American aspirations in the region. The U.S. rulers answered Mao within eight months with the Korean war, in which

over 7 million Chinese soldiers died.

Only then were the first measures taken against bourgeois property and a planned economy prepared. It was to be 1956 before Liu Shao-chi, whom Mao would later denounce as a "capitalist roader," announced at the Eighth National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party that the "coalition government of four classes" had come to an end.

Perhaps the most pronounced illusion entertained by defenders of Mao over the years has centered on the attitude of the Mao leadership to revolution outside of China. Seen through the distorted lens of Maoist polemics with the Khrushchev leadership, Maoism has been associated in the minds of the broad left with revolutionary fervor abroad and assaults upon privilege at home.

The reality has been remarkably different. It was Chou En-lai who orchestrated the 1954 negotiations in Geneva during which the Vietnamese victory over the French at Dienbienphu was converted into a partition of Indochina. He was thus responsible for the abandonment of the already liberated south to the U.S. surrogate, Ngo Dinh Diem, and for setting the stage for the U.S. war in Indochina.

When Khrushchev sought to omit China from negotiations with the United States for broad spheres of influence, the Chinese party denounced the Soviet Union. Soviet reprisals were of such devastating economic consequence that it had the equivalent force of a civil war. Factories were abandoned in mid-construction as Soviet and Eastern-bloc technicians were withdrawn and supplies were cut off.

The Mao leadership, isolated from the Soviet Union and unable to realize its aspirations of entering into an "understanding" with the capitalist West, pursued a two-tiered policy. At the level of rhetoric, the Mao leadership denounced the Soviet Union for abandoning the revolution. In practice, however, the attitude of the Chinese party itself toward struggles abroad remained barely distinguishable from the Soviet policies against which it polemicized.

### Indonesia and Chile

Perhaps the most shocking application of the Maoist version of "peaceful coexistence" took place in Indonesia in 1965. The Indonesian Communist Party was Maoist. It was also the largest party outside of the Communist bloc with 3 million members and 15 million supporters.

Yet the Indonesian party under direction from Mao pursued a policy of the parliamentary road to power, peaceful coexistence, and total subordination to the nationalist leadership of Sukarno. Mao pressured PKI leader Aidit to take no steps to arm the peasants or to challenge the Indonesian regime with whom Mao sought close state relations.

In the inevitable coup that followed, the U.S. 7th Fleet was in Javanese waters as U.S. jets flew overhead. The generals took power without a street demonstration, a strike, or an act of organized resistance. The slaughter echoed that ordered by Chiang Kai-shek in Shanghai in 1927, as nearly 1 million Indonesian workers, peasants, and students were killed in a period of three months.

But perhaps the lowest point of such politics occurred during the 1973 coup in Chile. Leftists fled to the Chinese embassy in Santiago to escape the goons of counterrevolution. Instead of finding

(continued on page 8)

# ...China

(continued from page 7)

refuge, they were turned over to the authorities by the embassy of Mao Tse-tung. It was, therefore, more than a symbolic act that the sole regime in the world to fly its flag at half-mast upon the death of Mao Tse-tung was the fascist government of Pinochet.

In place of Marx's aphorism "revolutionary in content, moderate in form," the Mao leadership pursued class collaboration in practice, concealed by confrontation in words.

## A ruling caste

In a remarkable series of interviews with an American journalist sympathetic to Maoism, Jian Qing, the wife of Mao Tse-tung, revealed that for all the denunciations of "capitalist roaders," bureaucracy, and privilege, the Mao faction had all the accoutrements of a ruling caste. There were special shops, sumptuous houses, chauffeurs, and even private screenings of Hollywood films.

Throughout all the gyrations of economic policy from 1949 to the present, party functionaries have been able to acquire substantial material benefits. All factions of the party, therefore, have a stake in preventing popular involvement in decision-making.

At first the party sought to industrialize by emulating the Soviet Union. Agricultural production was to be extracted from the countryside both to feed the workers needed for planned industry and to provide the capital investment necessary to launch industrial growth. In China, usable agricultural land is extraordinarily limited. Much of China is either desert or untraceable mountainside.

A consequence of the large population combined with the small amount of agricultural land has been concealed unemployment and under-employment. The temptation is to gravitate to the cities where the possibility of jobs and economic betterment beckons.

Since popular discussion and involvement in decision-making were ruled out by the party, the planning was neither explained to the people, nor did it reflect popular commitment. To prevent underemployed farmers from coming to the cities and forming an army of slum dwellers and unemployed, the Great Leap Forward was launched.

## Agriculture and industry

From 1958 to 1962, underemployed peasant labor was confined to rural communes, which were mini-production centers. Steel factories in cities were created in miniature through backyard blast furnaces in which tools were made, cement was produced, and the work force was substituted for technology.

Under this Maoist scheme, any attempt by workers or peasants to fight for a larger portion of the surplus was denounced as "materialism."

The very functionaries who so denounced the workers enjoyed privileges beyond the fantasy of Chinese toilers.

By the late 1950s, urban workers had not had a raise in 20 years. Workers, whether technically skilled or not, had no role in plant decisions. The "shop-floor committees" of Maoist legend consisted of party functionaries and police. Where token workers were included, they were not consulted. The sole task of these committees was to pass on decisions to the ranks and to coerce reluctant workers to work overtime without pay.

There were many instances of worker refusal. "No" votes led to disappearances to labor camps. The restiveness was so severe that the party sought to loosen up. The brief declaration of "Let a hundred flowers bloom, let a hundred schools of thought contend" produced an avalanche of criticism, protest, and

denunciations. The party panicked, and the lid was hurriedly put back on—with mass arrests to punctuate the point.

From 1962 to 1966 Liu Shao-chi and Deng Xiaoping relegated the Mao faction to minority status as popular resentment built toward an explosion. The giant communes were abandoned. Centralized planning had failed to provide reliable criteria for production decisions, because workers and peasants dared not voice opinions for fear of reprisal. Therefore, it was modified.

Peasants were now allowed to sell part of their production on the free market, and efforts were made to modernize industry. But China suffered from the coordinated blockade of the Soviet Union and the capitalist West. Investment capital was absent. Technological help was non-existent. Thus, productivity was condemned to levels of growth that could not keep pace with the population expansion. The effort to break out of isolation by catering to the national bourgeois leaderships in developing countries led to the further isolation of China.

## Cultural Revolution

With the pressure growing within the party to find a route toward rapprochement with the Soviet Union and with criticisms of Mao becoming open after the disaster in Indonesia, the Cultural Revolution unfolded. The Red Guards were a device as much designed to attack opponents of the Mao faction as they were a crude solution to the explosive danger of youth unemployment in the cities.

To gauge the magnitude of the repression and chaos unleashed by the Cultural Revolution, it is necessary to appreciate the fact that 20 million youths were deported during the late

Chinese understood to be the Gang of Five—with the unspoken addition of Chairman Mao.

An explosion of popular rage was unleashed against the party upon the death of Chou En-lai, who was looked upon as the one figure in the central leadership who had tried to slow or reverse the terrible period of the Cultural Revolution.

His funeral inspired a mass outpouring of sentiment in enormous demonstrations, notably the rally in Tien An Min Square. Banners attacking the party's repression and the militancy of the demonstrators frightened all factions of the party and the bureaucracy.

The regime sought to calm mass anger by giving voice to the criticisms which were once grounds for imprisonment and even death. Party leaders

Xiannian. They sought to revert to the party life of the 1950s and to prevent drastic changes in economic policy.

The third faction, led by Deng Xiaoping, includes party Chairman Hu Yaobang and Premier Zhao Ziyang. This is the "reform group."

The moderates attempted a 10-year plan in 1978 entailing investment on a large scale in heavy industry with centralized planning and a wage freeze. The result was the emergence of an open worker and student opposition to the party's policies but also to its role in the political life of China.

The reform faction supported the crackdown on dissent but sponsored a return to individual farming. The peasants have responded to the return to individual farming with enthusiasm because the heavy hand of the party

**"The Mao faction had all the accoutrements of a ruling caste...special shops, sumptuous houses, chauffeurs, and even private screenings of Hollywood films."**

attacked abuses, but tried to confine these to the period of the Cultural Revolution.

For nearly a year all China erupted in wall posters, spontaneous mass meetings, leaflets, and group discussions in an atmosphere reminiscent of Paris during the May events of 1968.

Democracy Wall was born. Posters listing grievances and calling for social and political change appeared daily. Huge crowds assembled to read and debate them. People came from great distances just to photograph the wall

bureaucracy was stayed. Grain production shot up. Farmers' markets burgeoned in the cities.

But as agriculture reverted to private production, the gap between entrepreneurs and hired hands grew wide. Some large farmers earned as much as \$12,000 a year—an unheard of amount in China. The farmer without skills, with many dependents or unproductive land

has, however, been pauperized. The social support system for the disadvantaged has disappeared.

In the cities, factory ownership remains in state hands. The unemployed are urged to start small businesses and can hire workers. The number of unemployed said to have been generated by the Cultural Revolution was 26 million. Restaurants and shops have sprung up on a profit-making basis.

The housing shortages in the cities have been vastly increased and exacerbated. Cheap rent is disappearing.

## The Special Economic Zones

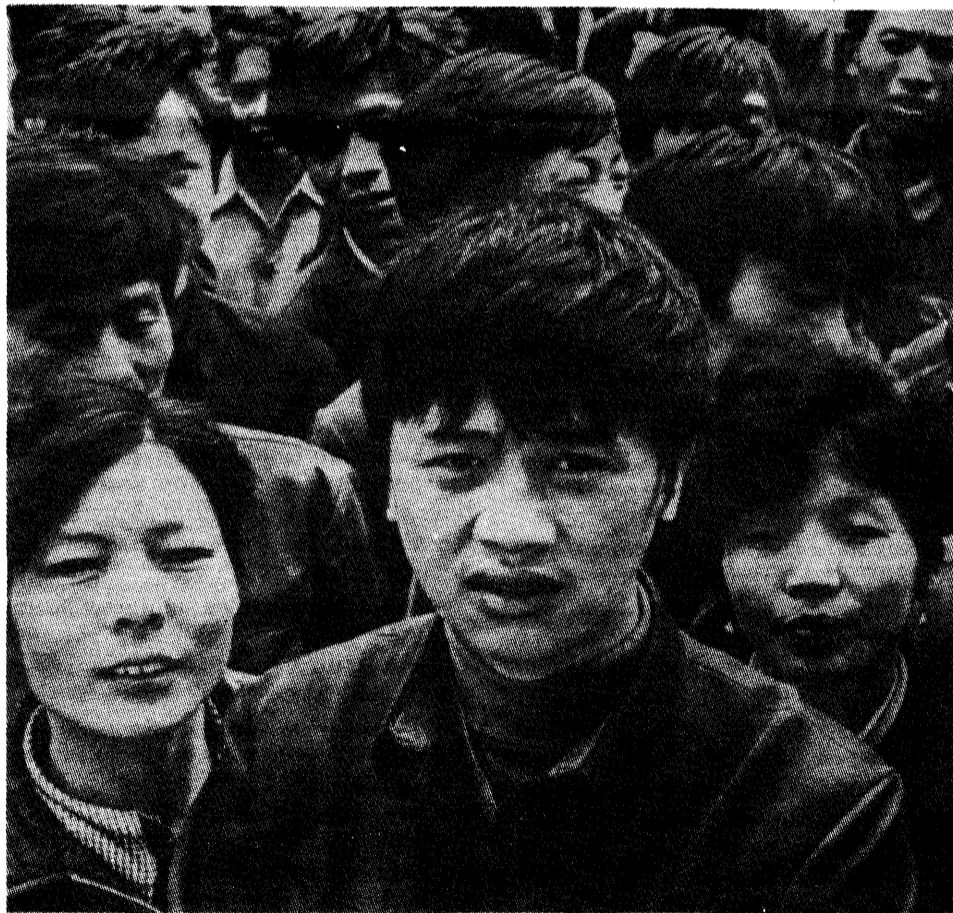
Perhaps the most dramatic expression of the use of the free market to use price mechanism as a guide to production while seeking to obtain foreign investment is the creation of 14 "Special Economic Zones."

The declared objectives for these zones, known as "SEZ's," include the securing of overseas direct investment, technology, and equipment. The development of managerial skills, obtaining of experience in international business, and the use of the SEZ's as experimental models for the larger economy have been proposed.

The establishment of enterprises that can hire on the free labor market in order to reduce urban unemployment is a further task ascribed to the SEZ's. The expansion of foreign trade, increases in foreign exchange, and entry in greater degree into the world market were sought.

It is assumed that these steps will raise the standard of living in the SEZ's. But they are also expected to result in a fundamental change in the economic system. Production costs, including wages, rent, and costs of raw materials and energy will be lower in the SEZ's than in Hong Kong and other competing Asian nations.

Between 1979 and 1982, according to a recent study, the Chinese government built four SEZ's in Shenzhen (including the Shekou Industrial Zone), Shantou, Zhuhai, and Xiamen. By the end of 1981, the Chinese State Council reported that these four SEZ's had received direct overseas investment of \$1.73 billion, which was 60 percent of



'60s and early '70s. The entire university system was shut down for 10 years. The skills of an entire generation were lost.

Covert efforts by Chou En-lai and Deng Xiaoping to break out of the impasse of mass dislocation, chaos, and the tangible hatred for the party among the masses were enhanced by the new openings to the West which brought Nixon to Peking. Technology began to be imported, and an introduction into the private market of the agrarian surplus left in the hands of peasants occurred. But these attempts were punctuated by reversion to the purges and disarray of the Cultural Revolution.

## China after Mao

Only with Mao's death in October 1976 did the minority around Chou En-lai and Deng Xiaoping strike at the Mao faction. They staged a military coup against the "Gang of Four," which all

posters and to join in this unofficial popular assembly. Every morning there were new posters, leaflets and impromptu meetings. Every factory had its wall posters.

The popular explosion mounted and the party leaders temporized, speaking openly of the danger of mass revolt. Only the absence of an organization to formulate mass demands, to press them upon the authorities—and through which a mass leadership could crystallize—allowed the regime to stall, maneuver, and ride out the storm.

After the popular explosion in Tien An Min Square, three factions emerged in the party. One was composed of functionaries of the Cultural Revolution led by Hua Guofeng. Within two years they were forced out.

The second faction, known as the "moderates," ran the army and administrators and was led by President Li

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the total direct investment in China.

By 1982 these four SEZ's alone had signed 1500 contracts with foreign corporations. In the hope of raising the standard of living in the SEZ's and thereby gaining popular support, the government also declared its intention to lure both Taiwan and Hong Kong into close economic integration with China.

By January 1983 the government allowed corporations in the zones to negotiate their own wage systems—either piece-rate, hourly, daily, or monthly wages. If the bonus system is more flexible than elsewhere in China and there is a better welfare program than in non-zoned China, wages in the zones still constitute only 50 percent of wage levels for comparable work in Hong Kong.

All enterprises in the 14 zones have wide autonomy. They do not have to follow the state plan. They make their own decisions on what, how much, and in what manner they produce. They set prices for their products. Management systems govern. Technicians have replaced political cadre as managers. Material incentives have wholly replaced political criteria in inducing hard and efficient work.

#### Increasing dependence . . .

Most of the zone businesses sell in the international market. The government counts on this to expand China's foreign trade and to increase its foreign exchange earnings. According to Wei Yuming, deputy minister of Foreign Economic Relations and Trade in Peking, 80 percent of sales are now in the international market and only 20 percent in the domestic market. The dependence on the international market is decisive.\*

It is true that when products are shipped to the domestic Chinese markets, their prices are controlled by the government, but the market mechanism within the zones depends on supply and demand in the world market.

There are various political consequences resulting from the 14 new economic zones. The loosening of bureaucratic and governmental controls in the SEZ's has resulted in Western political and cultural impact on Chinese youth, who were wholly alienated by the Cultural Revolution. The average income in the zones is 40 percent higher than outside them. Management outside the zones is inefficient, productivity lower, and bureaucratic harassment far more severe. The restiveness with official ideology is fueled by the presence of the zones.

One response of an alienated population has been "economic crime."

Smuggling, bribery, tax evasion, and theft have increased rapidly.

The relationship between the market mechanism of the zones and China's planning structure is increasingly complex and problematic. Commodity prices in the zones are determined by the international market, but many commodities come from the rest of China into the zones. It is increasingly difficult for the government to control the marketing relationship between the zones and the national economy.

Attempts to re-centralize planning and to centralize allocation of financial resources come up against the inflationary impact of the zones. Food prices in the zones are twice the national level, and prices of production and consumer goods are higher. Living standards have declined due to inflation.

Many projects planned by the government are now being built in the zones outside of the plan. But the demand for raw materials, energy, and equipment is high. Prices rise. Foreigners with greater purchasing power enter, causing consumer goods to become costly. Taxes are lower so prices are approaching international levels. At the same time wages are half those in Hong Kong. If the government increases wages in the zones it will

widen the income gap in the rest of China.

But above all, the financial prospects of the zones flow from the international political and economic climate, particularly in the Western Pacific. The Southern China Sea has oil potential comparable to that of Saudi Arabia. Western oil companies are already drilling and pumping, and U.S. banks have provided the loans to the Chinese government for this exploration.

Although this development opens the door to large amounts of foreign exchange with which technology can be bought, it also intensifies the interdependence of the Chinese and Western economies.

#### . . . increasing disparities

It is not the zones alone which are causing fissures in the planning system. The disparity between the free market in agriculture with its decentralized character and the centralized industrialized sector is widening. By now the entire agricultural sector is virtually a free market except that a small percentage of agricultural production is sold to the state at a fixed price.

At the same time, this market freedom does not translate into political freedom or social mobility. As late as 1970 a peasant could not move to a city. And peasants still cannot move to urban areas as residents. Neither jobs nor housing are provided.

Chinese workers can only move from one place to another if they can find a job in advance and on their own, and this is very difficult. In practice, workers can neither change jobs nor move. Only if they swap jobs with a friend can they move about and this is rarely done. There is no real job market.

With money you can buy commodities but at fixed prices determined by planners increasingly unable to control the elements of their plan. Supply and demand changes, but the price structure is not flexible. The market economy is not real under such conditions. It operates in the countryside, but in cities price structures are fixed, and major markets are separated from each other.

There is no real way of knowing how plant directors make decisions. All decisions made at the top by planning commissions depend upon statistics collected, but there is no check on their accuracy. These plans are then handed down to bureaucrats and managers to

**"The right to strike was abolished in a 1983 modification of the constitution."**

implement uncritically. So the plan at the top is increasingly arbitrary.

Plans are made for oil development where reserves do not exist, and none are made where they do. Complaints of this nature constantly surface. Recently, China attempted to use Leontieff input-output models, but China lacks the computers for such calculations. And the computers depend, in any event, on accurate data collection.

If prices are fixed but unconnected to supply and demand—or to productivity—there is a problem. If prices do not reflect a gap in productivity in different sectors—as with the zones and the non-zones—chaos results. Chinese economists have tried to use "shadow price" mathematical models to calculate prices which are closest to actual prices. They simulate what supply and demand should be and estimate the price on this basis.

It is evident that the bureaucratic state is caught on the horns of a dilemma. The planned sector is unable to obtain reliable data because the participation of the workers and the population in decision-making is precluded. But the market mechanism which brings more reliable criteria also renders plan-



ning increasingly difficult.

There is the problem of inflation with prices going up. The prices of consumer goods used to be wholly controlled; now they are flexible. Peasants can raise prices and material conditions improve. But peasants then hoard to raise prices. Meanwhile, workers and intellectuals are on fixed incomes. But inflation outruns extra pay.

#### Bleak prospects for youth

Although the zones attract investment there is not enough investment to increase production and augment the number of factories across China. Only 5 percent of high-school graduates in both urban and rural areas are able to pass examinations for college. Only 10 percent can pass two-year technical-school exams. So 80 percent of high-school graduates cannot get jobs after high school.

Rural students go back to work on farms. Urban students try to find something themselves. They open small restaurants, hotels, shoe repair shops, and enter service trades. Street peddlers abound, and the poor and lumpen fill the cities.

Today in China young people have to wait two years after high school before they can get jobs. They must stay with their parents. This results in youth delinquency and crime. Workers used to be able to keep jobs once they got them, but this too is changing. There is now an army of unemployed who *never* get jobs.

In the countryside, however, where between 80 and 85 percent of the population lives, the loosening up of bureaucratic controls has occurred under the slogan "Enrich yourselves!" Indeed, some have gotten rich. Many are doing well. Some can earn \$5000 to \$6000 a year. Peasants who went hungry for a long time now buy trucks and go to Japan as tourists. Some have even bought airplanes for agriculture. But this is an uneven process, and the emergence of rich peasants and entrepreneurs puts different pressures on the regime.

Worker income has not kept pace with the rising inflation. By mid-1980, the rate of inflation was at 7 percent, and *Business Week* reported that by the end of 1980 the real rate of inflation in China was between 15 and 20 percent. Forty percent of income goes for food, and it is food which suffers the highest rate of inflation.

There is a simmering restlessness just beneath the surface of Chinese life that is politically explosive. In this situation, a change of leadership—in a society where succession is always a crisis—may be a critical juncture.

Perhaps the most serious aspect of the reform movement's attempts to

modernize China through opening up to the West and relying on the market is, as in Poland, the increasing dependence on the capitalist cycle itself. The *Far Eastern Economic Review* estimated on Sept. 26, 1980, that if China maintained the pace of modernization projected, it would accumulate a debt on the level of Poland's or that of Brazil. The trade deficit with the capitalist countries rose from \$1.25 billion in 1977 to \$3.5 billion in 1978 to \$4.5 billion by 1979.

By July 1980 the U.S. Department of Commerce had forecast that China's gross external debt of \$3.5 billion would rise to \$16 billion by 1985 with debt service of \$3.2 billion. The leadership had to cut back development to avoid this.

By 1980 unemployment was acknowledged at 5 million—figures which were heavily understated. But in 1981 the regime was acknowledging 7 million unemployed. Now, with the threat of dismissal hanging over the heads of 100 million wage earners, unemployment is a major source of concern for Chinese workers. This becomes particularly explosive as profits of businessmen approach 10 times the level of the average industrial worker's wage.

But the continuing source of danger, notwithstanding the loosening of controls in the countryside, is the hidden rural unemployment where peasants cannot come to the cities and private production cannot employ them. This unemployment has been projected as high as 50 percent of the 300 million agricultural producers. Should the international economy go into decline, the ramifications in China will be profound, and the reversion to severe repression in the countryside will be inevitable.

#### The new constitution

These realities are also reflected in the legal system. The Fifth National People's Congress met in Peking in February and March of 1978 to approve changes in the government and in the constitution.

The new constitution included a chapter on the Fundamental Rights and Duties of Citizens. It guarantees fundamental rights such as "freedom of speech, correspondence, the press, assembly, association, procession, demonstration, and the right to strike."

The right to strike, however, was abolished in a 1983 modification of the constitution.

Closer examination reveals that the changes are not in the direction of protecting rights of citizens but rather in guaranteeing the institutional control of the state apparatus.

Amnesty International reported that

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# ...China

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although thousands of people labelled "rightists" since 1957 were rehabilitated, and over 10,000 victims of the Gang of Four were also rehabilitated in Shanghai alone, many posthumously, people who criticize the regime today do not fare better.

Eight people were executed in Hangzhou, capital of Zhejiang province. They were said to be leaders of 13 "counterrevolutionary groups."

They were labelled counterrevolutionary because they "spread propaganda aimed at undermining the socialist system."

One of these political offenders, He Chunshu, was executed in Canton. A 45-year-old teacher, he was sentenced to death for writing and distributing a leaflet critical of party leaders. He had "persistently refused to admit his crimes," according to the notice of the People's High Court of Quandong province.

In a report from Shanghai, dated Dec. 12, 1982, *The New York Times* reporter Christopher S. Wren gave a detailed account of the new legal system established by the government.

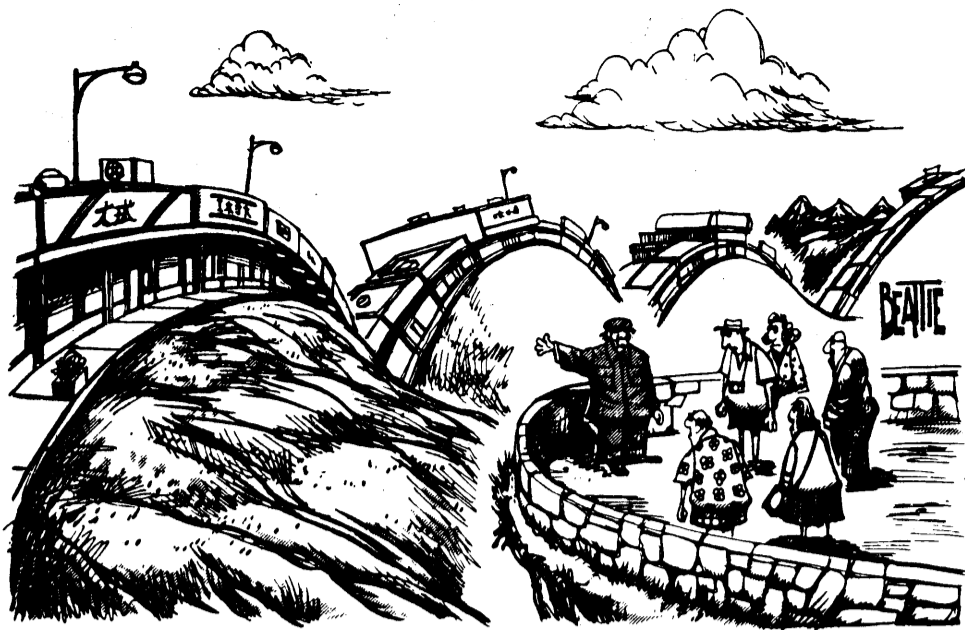
A Shanghai attorney, Dai Manming, told Wren that during the Cultural Revolution the whole legal system was damaged. A defendant had no right to obtain a lawyer to defend him or her. "Under the Gang of Four," he said, "people like us had nothing to do. We were forced out into other jobs, to factories, to the countryside, and to remote parts of the country."

Now Mr. Dai practices law in a government-run legal advisory office among 200 full-time lawyers with 40 part-time lawyers. This is in Shanghai, which has a population of 12 million. In China as a whole there are 5500 full-time and 1300 part-time lawyers—in a population of over 1 billion.

## Guilty until proven innocent

But what do lawyers do? They are "an important force for upholding the legal system of the state," Mr. Dai tells us. "The lawyers' regulations stipulate that our task is first to protect the rights of the state and to safeguard the implementation of laws."

There is no legal presumption of innocence until proven guilty. Trials never take place before the defendant



"We have a new landmark since we started our experiments with capitalism... It's the Great Mall of China..."

has confessed during pre-trial interrogation.

Huang Huoqiang, China's chief prosecutor, told the National People's Congress that 99.97 percent of the criminals prosecuted during the first nine months of 1981 were found guilty.

The defense lawyer's task is never to suggest that his client is innocent but to look for circumstances that may merit a lighter sentence. He cannot visit his client without government permission.

Ma Rongjie, the lawyer assigned to defend the Gang of Four, never met them because, he tells us, "There was no need to talk to them."

Jiang Hua, president of the Supreme People's Court, states, "In cases of educational significance, sentences are passed at mass rallies where the defendant is sentenced, crowds cheer, and the defendant is led off to execution."

It is instructive to note how the law can be applied subjectively, for political offenses receive very different treatment. The Canton telecommunications director was convicted of using his position to speculate in luxury goods smuggled from Hong Kong. He received two years. Wei Jing Sheng, a member of the democracy movement, received 15 years for "agitation."

Ji Dechun, a former official in Liaoning province, served five years for his role in the Cultural Revolution. But when he was considered insufficiently repentant, he was given a further sentence of 20 years.

Between July 1983 and January 1984, over 6000 people were executed for

"common crimes" flowing from unemployment, such as petty theft and even unpaid debt.

It is also worth noting that the new constitution was adopted under a regime in which the entire leadership had been victims of purges. Virtually every current leader of the Chinese Communist Party spent eight to 10 years in prison or rural labor camps. Deng Xiaoping's son was crippled for life through incessant beatings at the hands of Mao Tse-tung's Red Guards. Hu Yaobang, the party's "reforming" national secretary, spent the period of the Cultural Revolution cleaning a stable and sleeping with the horses.

## The Democracy Movement

Repression has been the fate of the Democracy Movement that flourished in early 1979. The workers who were active in this movement were among the hardest hit. An independent trade-union movement was formed in Shang Yang. All of its leaders were put in prison where they remain. In Taiyan, workers who tried to organize their own trade unions were all put in prison.

The same thing occurred in Shanghai from 1978 to 1980. In 1979 Fu Shenqi, a 22-year-old worker in a construction materials factory, started an association of students and workers and published a journal called *The Voice of Democracy*. He was later to become chairperson of the Association of Chinese Unofficial Publications—a nationwide organization formed at the end of 1980. Every member was imprisoned. Fu Shenqi was sentenced to seven years. Nevertheless, *The Voice of Democracy* continues to be published in Hong Kong.

Despite the repression, during 1978 and 1979 the worker-student associations spread to every major city. Fu describes himself as a Marxist and describes his basic political position to be that of socialist democracy. He ran for the local delegation to the People's Congress in 1980 before his imprisonment.

There is no direct electoral system in China. Elections, in fact, are a farce. Fu, however, stated that the elections offered a historical opportunity to exploit the charade of an election to explain to people how they were disenfranchised.

In his factory, where he ran, there were 1600 workers and two stages to the election. Election law requires that any candidate receive 50 percent of the vote. Fu received 700 out of the 1600, the largest vote of the four candidates—over 40 percent.

## The price of dissent

During the period between phase one and the run-off, party officials warned all workers that anyone who voted for Fu would be condemned as a counter-revolutionary. He was then arrested and imprisoned.

Wang Xizhe was a worker in a chemical factory in Canton. He was very famous during the Cultural Revolution as a leader of the Red Guards. In 1973 he co-authored with friends a critique of

the Cultural Revolution and of Lin Biao and Mao Tse-tung. He was imprisoned from 1973 to 1976.

After Mao's death in 1976, Wang was released. He continued to write articles and to organize until 1978, when he was again imprisoned—this time for 14 years.

Wang, like Fu, describes himself as a Marxist. He gave critical support to the reform faction of the party but published a demand for an independent workers' movement in China. He was involved with the worker-student associations which published an enormous volume of material expressing every point of view.

The majority of articles and demands focused on: 1) removing the bureaucratic system; 2) political democracy; 3) free expression; 4) a re-evaluation of Mao Tse-tung; 5) a public re-examination of the history of the Chinese Communist Party; 6) a public hearing on the events of the Cultural Revolution; and 7) economic reform.

It is not difficult to understand why Deng Xiaoping sent letters of support to General Wojciech Jaruzelski when martial law was declared in Poland. Like Poland, China has relied enormously upon expansion based upon the investment and purchases of the world capitalist economy. Like Poland, agriculture is privatized while heavy-handed attempts at planning founder on the twin poles of unreliable data and the exclusion of the population from every aspect of the decision-making process.

Like Poland, the attempts at reform of the bureaucratic centralized system result in economic inequity amidst privilege and repression. And like Poland, the workers and students have reached out to each other in a climate of unemployment and uncertainty.

Poland, of course, has one-thirtieth the population of China and is a major industrial producer. For China, socialist democracy is not merely a moral imperative which is seizing the consciousness of a new generation of workers and students. It is a minimum prerequisite for economic survival in a society presided over by a bureaucracy as discredited in the eyes of its masses as it is dependent upon the captains of capital for continued growth. The fourth Chinese Revolution will unfold over the next decades and it will shake the earth. ■

## Connie Stancliff: 1939-1984

Dear editor:

I am writing to inform your readership of the recent death of Connie Stancliff, my longtime friend, comrade, and the mother of my 18-year-old daughter. Connie died Nov. 15, 1984, after losing a courageous battle against lung cancer.

Connie was 45 years old the Saturday before her death. I met Connie when we were both music students at San Diego State University in 1962. We got married and dropped out of school. As the Vietnam War heated up, Connie and I got involved in the activities of a series of antinuclear, antiwar, peace, and radical groups. In 1967, while I was again a student, we joined the YSA and then the SWP.

Connie left the SWP sometime during the early 70s. However, Connie was a feminist, antiwarrior, gay-rights partisan, and revolutionary socialist until the day she died. She had full confidence in the socialist revolution and the potential of the U.S. working class.

Messages of condolence can be sent to Wendy Hayes, Sara Stancliff, and/or myself. If desired, a donation can be made to a favorite charity or antiwar group in her name.

Alan Stancliff  
Oakland, Calif.

## International Viewpoint



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# British miners' wives rally in support of strikers

"Mines, Not Missiles" was the theme of a national women's march in York, England, on Nov. 3. The message sent by this slogan was first of all a protest against the Conservative government, which spends millions of dollars on nuclear weapons and at the same time closes mines and destroys communities.

Equally important, however, is the fact that through this and similar demonstrations British women are serving notice that they are no longer passive, non-political bystanders. With their militant activities in the mining communities and in the peace movement women are out on the front line.

The close relationship between the two movements was underlined at a solidarity meeting held in Lancashire, England, on Oct. 20. Miners from all the major coalfields and their wives met with supporters from the rest of Europe and the United States. The discussion at the opening session linked the activities of the miners' wives and the fight of the Greenham Common women against deployment of Cruise missiles.

In order to describe this new movement and place it in its historical perspective we reprint a slightly abridged article from the Oct. 1, 1984, issue of *International Viewpoint*.—The Editors.

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By JUDITH BAKER

"What we are doing as women in this 1984, and possibly 1985, miners' strike is making history. We are setting a pattern for the future for the involvement of women in political struggle which will show what a formidable force we can be..."

These were the closing words of Maureen Douglass of Barnsley Women Against Pit Closures to the mass rally of 10,000 women from the mining communities which took place last May. These women are indeed making history in the power and dynamic of their actions. Mack McGahey, the miners' union vice president, has even gone so far as to say that if the women had sup-

ported the miners in this way during the 1926 general strike, there might have been a different outcome.

In fact, miners' wives were organized in 1926 but in a different way and with a different impact. The comparison is very enlightening.

In her book, "Women and the Miners' Lockout," Marion Phillips, the then editor of *Labour Women*, a Labour Party women's journal, records how miners' wives were involved in public rallies and demonstrations as well as organizing food parcels and fund-raising. In July 1926 an 8000-strong annual demonstration of Labour women was turned over to the theme of the pit strike and miners' wives led the march through London.

The miners' wives were not organized in local and national groups as they are today, but the Labour Party women's sections and national committee worked closely with them. Marion Phillips records how she was approached by the Miners Federation to set up a women's committee to organize fund raising and to be a liaison with miners' families. This committee was later to help with caring for miners' children when starvation began to set in, and it raised vast sums of money during the nine-month lockout.

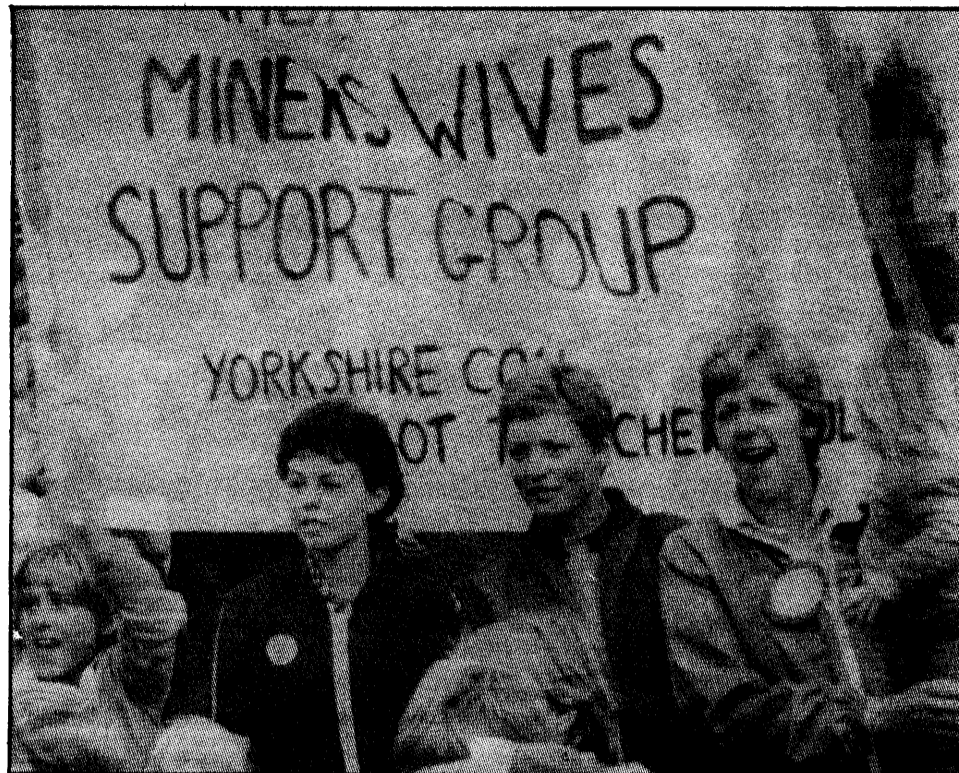
## Women lead

So, women have organized before, but in 1984, with the experience of the women's movement and the changes in the labor movement behind us, the miners' wives are achieving something new.

These women are not just supporting the miners' strike through organizing food distribution, fund raising, and welfare rights advice. They are politically leading through taking their own initiatives—on the picket lines and in mass demonstrations. The demonstration in London on Aug. 11, the first national march in the city since the strike began, was a classic example of this.

Margaret Thatcher, the British prime minister, was safely ensconced in a villa in Switzerland when the 20,000 to 30,000 miners' wives marched through the streets of London chanting "We will win, we will win, we will win."

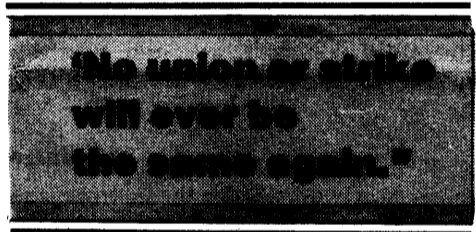
This time they were supported by Labour Party women and other feminist groups. The men, including Arthur



Scargill (the Miners' union president) and Tony Benn (the leader of the Labour Party's left wing), were bringing up the rear.

## Pickets, not pin-ups

The self-activity of the women, and in particular, their role on the picket lines has had a massive impact within the labor movement. The National Union of Mineworkers had previously been renowned for its nude pin-ups on page 3 of the *Yorkshire Miner* (the union's regional journal). The women have been taunted by miners who tell



them to go back to the kitchen sink. The women often say that at first their own husbands were also aghast. "But now," says Betty Heathfield, who is on the recently formed National Coordinating Committee, "it has created a fantastic understanding between the men and women."

In a speech to a fringe meeting at the TUC (Trades Union Congress) conference, Heathfield explained this further when she said, "The women's activity is a means of awakening and uniting the whole of the labor movement at the grassroots. Our activity has, I think, brought a lot of men into the strike. And when we win, it will be a victory for everyone. It will wipe out forever the image of the wife who's very willing to escort her husband across the picket line..."

In their new-found strength the miners' wives have also linked up with other women, not, as in the past when Labour Party women were "helping out" in the 1926 strike, but through action and self-organization. In fact, many miners' wives were directly inspired by the example of the women at Greenham Common.

## New strength

Lorraine Bowler of the Barnsley group explained it this way: "It's because of the women's movement that we got organized. Women are now much more militant and informed. Some of our women would call themselves feminists; some wouldn't. Many of our meetings are explicitly women only; after all, the men have their branch meetings..."

It is clear that the self-organization of the women will have a lasting impact. These women will not, like their sisters before them, be left out of the history books. Betty Heathfield knows what she would like to see. "No union or strike will ever be the same again. Now we need to get the wives of dockers, railway workers, and lorry drivers involved..."

"We've got a national coordinating effort for the women underway now, because during the strike women have changed a lot. They are saying that when the strike is over they will not disperse, and we don't want them to either. The strike has been the quickest social and political education we could have gone through... Now we have become political animals. It would be a shame to let this go. It shows what can be done."

Indeed it does. It shows that women themselves can make history by organizing together. ■

# 500,000 march in Warsaw

By ALAN BENJAMIN

Over 500,000 people filled the streets of Warsaw on Nov. 3 in a funeral procession for the slain pro-Solidarity priest, Jerzy Popieluszko. For nearly 12 hours, the St. Stanislas quarter of the city became transformed into one gigantic demonstration in support of the outlawed trade union. Hundreds of red and white banners, thousands of badges, and the presence of large union delegations from every corner of the country were clear evidence that Solidarity has not been silenced.

Popieluszko had been an outspoken supporter of the banned trade union—most of his parishioners were steel workers at the Huta Warszawa plant. On Oct. 19 he was kidnapped by three men who, it was later disclosed, were members of the Polish secret police. On Oct. 26, Captain Jan Piotrowski confessed to killing the well-known priest on the grounds that "he was sowing dissension among his parishioners."

The mass protests had forced the government to publicly acknowledge its direct role in this assassination.

Three days after Popieluszko's disappearance, the Provisional Coordinating Committee of Solidarity (TKK), issued

a statement condemning the regime for its responsibility in this kidnapping. It stated:

"This disappearance is not an isolated event. Since Dec. 13, 1981, similar acts have been perpetrated against supporters of Solidarity. The list of victims of the state of siege is long. It includes many who died or were "disappeared" at the hands of the security forces while on strike, at a peaceful demonstration, or simply while at church. Now there is an addition to the list: It is a priest who was kidnapped by "unknown" people. All of this demonstrates that state terror has become a stable trait of political life in Poland."

The massive outpouring of anger against the ruling bureaucracy is proof that three years of General Jaruzelski's "normalization" have not succeeded in defeating the Polish working class. The funeral procession in Warsaw, as well as the numerous one-hour strikes called to protest the killing—such as the one called in Gdansk by Andrzej Gwiazda and Anna Walentynowicz—are evidence that Solidarity is very much alive. ■

## Miners' wives in conference

A delegate conference of women representatives of all the coalfields involved in the miners' dispute met in Chesterfield on November 10 and 11. As a result of this highly successful conference, a national women's organisation has been established. Delegates endorsed the statement below and reaffirmed their total commitment to the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) in their struggle to retain pits, jobs and mining communities.

### Statement of aims

- To consolidate the national women's organisation and ensure victory to the NUM in the present struggle to prevent pit closures and protect mining communities.
- To further strengthen the organisation of women's groups which has been built up during the 1984 miners' strike.
- To develop relationships between the NUM and the women's organisation at all levels.
- To campaign on issues which affect mining communities, particularly peace, jobs, health and education.
- To promote and develop education for working-class women.
- To publicise all activities of the national women's organisation at all levels.

NUM press release



Scene from "Nicaragua: No Pasaran," a film by David Bradbury.

## U.S. tightens stranglehold on Nicaraguan economy

By DIANNE FEELEY

The U.S. government is engaged in a deadly battle with the Sandinista revolution. This battle takes different forms—from diplomatic maneuvers to the financing of a military buildup in the entire region to the imposition of economic pressures upon this small and technologically underdeveloped country. Of all the weapons in its arsenal, the weapon of economic pressure is the least costly to the United States, the least easily documented in the world press, and the most difficult for the Nicaraguans to counter.

### The inheritance

From the first days of the revolution's triumph, the Sandinistas were faced with serious economic problems. An agro-export society, vulnerable to even slight fluctuations on the world market, Nicaragua has little industry. Although it exports lumber, it must import all paper products, from newsprint to toilet paper. Although it is a leading producer of cotton, Nicaragua must import all of its thread.

Like many other countries whose economic development has been shaped by the needs of imperialism, Nicaragua is forced to sell its raw materials at prices determined to a large measure by the industrialized countries. The unequal rate of exchange means that, while in 1977 Nicaragua had to export 4.4 tons of coffee in order to import a tractor, by 1981 the same tractor cost the equivalent of 11.2 tons of coffee. In 1970, 100 bags of coffee purchased 100 barrels of oil. But a dozen years later, it bought only three barrels of oil.

Handicapped by the legacy of imperialism, the revolution also faced an immediate economic crisis. When Somoza cleared out of the country in 1979, he left \$3.5 million in the national treasury. By July 1979 the foreign debt stood at \$1.65 billion, the highest per capita debt in all of Latin America. Inflation was running at 80%, while one-third of the population was unemployed. Production plummeted both in the agricultural and industrial sectors. Famine was beginning to spread throughout the cities.

### The Sandinista experiment

What is remarkable about the Nicaraguan revolution is its capacity to reverse that process of disintegration. Nicaragua is the first Latin American country to carry out a land reform program that both massively redistributed land and increased production immediately. Today, state enterprises represent about 20% of the land ownership, while nine different kinds of cooperatives account for another 12%. While in 1978 nearly 43% of the land was owned by large landowners in plots of 500 manzanas or more (1 manzana = 1.7 acres), today the same group controls only 11% of cultivable land. They are permitted to hang on to their land only because they are able to use it productively.

Through the process of land redistribution—as

well as through price guarantees and the extension of credit to the cooperatives, the small farmers, and the state enterprises—the Sandinista government has pursued the fundamental goal of reorienting the entire economy to serve the interests of the majority. Although private producers who are efficiently using their land have not been expropriated, their economic power has been weakened by state intervention. Laws mandate that these individuals must pay their taxes and must turn their products over to the ministry of foreign trade in order for them to be exported.

### The war's impact on the economy

Since the *contras* launched their attacks on Nicaragua in 1981, many of the products grown on the northern border cannot be harvested. For instance, 80% of the beans are grown in the war zone. Propane gas that used to be trucked in from Honduras cannot be delivered. In other cases, the shortage of vehicles has resulted in an inability to bring the products to centers of distribution. For instance, the nearly 2000 small merchants who come from the Masaya area to Managua every day used to be served by 15 buses and 100 small trucks. Now there are two to five buses and 50 trucks.

Backed by U.S. military advisers and supplies, the *contras* have focused on disrupting the economy in two concrete ways. First, their constant attacks force the Sandinistas to reorient the economy to defend the country, diverting precious resources from economic planning. Military spending represented less than 7% of the 1980 and 1981 budgets, but doubled in 1983. This year, 25% of the budget is earmarked for defense. Because production must be diverted to equipping an army, the growing scarcity of shoes and cloth, for example, leads to spiralling inflation.

Secondly, the *contras'* targets for destruction include supply centers and vital services. Nearly 50 healthcare workers alone have been kidnapped, injured or killed since the beginning of 1983.

### Against speculation

While struggling to build a rational program for organizing an economy geared to feeding its population and increasing the standard of living, the Sandinistas have been forced to declare a war on speculation. The existence of literally thousands of sellers who operate in the marketplace has made distribution and pricing difficult to control. But the legislation and inspection process was recently strengthened. Under the new law, eight basic products—cooking oil, sugar, soap, rice, sorghum, corn, beans, and salt—are guaranteed for everyone at constant prices. In effect, the distribution of these goods has been nationalized. The government pledges to supply these items. If shortages occur, it is prepared to import them.

By organizing a system that ensures real control over prices and by basing the entire maintenance of the system on the neighborhood Sandinista Defense

Committees (CDSs), the government is once again mobilizing the Nicaraguan masses in defense of the revolutionary process. Despite the economic difficulties, the Sandinistas have been able to ensure minimum supplies for the entire population.

When I was in Nicaragua in September, people of various social classes told me that the basic rations were adequate for their family needs. I ate lunch at the cafeteria of a government agency to which my brigade was affiliated. The agency provided a subsidized, well-balanced meal for 10 to 50 cents, depending on the worker's wage level. I went to several city markets where prices were what the traffic would bear. Eggs, chicken, fruit, and vegetables were plentiful, although expensive.

### The U.S. role

The U.S. government has consistently attempted to block loans and credit to the Sandinistas. It has done the following:

- Blocked in early 1982 a \$30 million loan from the Inter-American Development Bank that would have revitalized the fishing industry.
- Opposed a \$16 million World Bank loan for city development projects.
- Blocked a \$5 million U.N. development program for a survey of rural peoples' needs.
- Pressured West Germany, Holland, and other countries to end their economic aid to Nicaragua.
- Cut by 90 percent the amount of Nicaraguan sugar the United States bought at subsidized prices.
- Ended all U.S. aid to Nicaragua (in 1981) and refused to disburse a \$9.8 million food credit that was to be used to purchase wheat.
- Discounted Nicaraguan assets to 50 percent of value.
- Suspended last Sept. 28 the World Bank's credit to Nicaragua, citing the government's failure to make "timely" repayments on the debt.

Another factor that hampers Nicaragua's capacity to obtain essential imported goods is the bank practice of demanding "irrevocable" letters of credit several months before the goods are shipped. This half-year time delay puts an incredible cash-flow problem on the government. It is similar to the problems workers would face if forced to pay their rent and buy their food six months in advance.

Because of the government's inability to obtain credit, machines sit idle. Spare parts cannot be obtained. The Sandinistas have encouraged the development of an inventors' movement similar to the one that developed in Cuba. Workers who have creatively figured out a way of repairing machines are treated as heroes.

Another way the government has attempted to obtain goods is through trading its products for others. For instance, they are experimenting with exporting cement and mattresses for Cuban products.

But the lack of technicians, the lack of administrative skills, the lack of basic industry leaves Nicaragua with a fragile economy. It is true that Nicaragua has lost fewer technical workers than any other country that has carried out a revolution, yet it is the third poorest country in all of Latin America. The economic pressures the United States has brought to bear range from outright sabotage to last spring's mining of the ports to the denial of credit.

**'Many regard the economic pressure as the most dangerous of all the weapons the U.S. holds.'**

Many regard the economic pressure as the most dangerous of all the weapons the United States holds. *The New York Times* reported on Oct. 22 that Ruben Ulloa, a Sandinista labor leader, warned that several large Managua factories were on the verge of closing because they could no longer obtain hard currency to buy the parts needed. In many areas of the country, half of all the trucks and tractors are out of service, lacking tires or engine parts.

In summarizing the first five years of the revolution, the Historical Institute of Central America pointed out the four major economic projects the Sandinistas have attempted to implement: (1) refurbishing the country's infrastructure, much of which had been destroyed; (2) redistributing the nation's income in favor of the workers and peasants; (3) offsetting the current worldwide recession by a major investment project in agricultural and industrial production; (4) structuring an economy that can defend the country against attack.

The Institute points to the necessity of international political support as key to helping the Nicaraguan revolution survive. It is a duty to which we must commit ourselves. ■



# Mexican workers lose on both sides of border

By FRANK JARAMILLO

SAN FRANCISCO—Congress failed to pass the Simpson-Mazzoli immigration bill before adjourning for the year. This means there will be no change in immigration laws until a new bill is introduced and makes its way through the House and Senate next year.

Immigrant workers and others bitterly opposed the bill, but its defeat in Congress was probably due to sanctions placed on employers who hired undocumented workers and to some other features of the bill that affected employers' interests.

One of the basic ideas which underlies this proposed law is that undocumented immigrant workers—principally Mexicans—constitute a threat to the economy and to national security since, among other reasons, they take jobs and social and medical services away from U.S. workers. This idea is defended and spread by the government and the AFL-CIO. According to public opinion polls, 75 percent of the American people have swallowed this false idea.

The businesses that hire undocumented workers know this idea is untrue. Yet they have supported the proposed law—except with respect to the proposed sanction on employers—because they know that the law will make the so-called "illegals" more vulnerable.

While U.S. companies are exploiting

Mexican workers in the United States, they are also exploiting them in Mexico—in complicity with Mexican business interests.

On Sept. 24, a six-page section of *The Wall Street Journal* carried articles and ads devoted to luring U.S. corporations to invest in Mexico. The most offensive ad to Mexican workers was paid for by an employers' organization, the Bermudes Group of Industrial Parks.

The ad carried a chart, under which was the slogan "Weigh the Advantages."

### "A cheap labor force"

In one of the rows of the chart several Asian countries were listed: Hong Kong, South Korea, and Taiwan. In another row was Mexico with a listing of its advantages over the Asian countries. These included: "Vast natural resources," "A cheap labor force," "More productivity for less money," and "No other country in the world beats this powerful combination."

This idea is reaffirmed by Dennis P. Hodak, general manager of General Electric in Mexico, which is the largest and most important "maquiladora" industry in that country. Maquiladora industries are plants set up on the Mexican side of the border to process semi-manufactured products for the U.S. market. According to Hodak, the Mexican maquiladora industry has the greatest growth in the world. With a pre-



dicted growth of 25 percent annually, it is increasing more rapidly than U.S. industry in its best years.

A major reason for this growth is the low wage rate prevailing in these plants. A recent story in *The New York Times* showed graphically the effect of the low wages on the workers. A plant manager reported that he had to hire two workers if he wanted one. This was because one worker out of two would quit after a few days on the job because he or she could not meet minimum expenses on the wages paid.

U.S. companies are closing many of their plants in this country, leaving mil-

lions of workers without jobs. The unemployment of American workers is not due to undocumented workers. The bosses move in search of cheap labor.

They move to Mexico or they move to the South or Southwest United States where 80 percent of the Mexican immigrant labor force is concentrated. It is not strange, therefore, that Los Angeles and Houston are two of the most dynamic poles of industrial development in the United States.

### The "maquiladora" industry

Moreover, William L. Mitchell, director of the Bermudes Group of Industrial Parks in El Paso, Texas, goes much further in this respect when he says that "for each job that is created in Mexico in the 'maquiladora' industry, nearly 2.5 jobs are supported or generated in American plants. There are 5000 jobs in El Paso, Texas, that are connected with the 'maquiladoras' in Ciudad Juarez."

The cheap Mexican labor does not produce unemployment in the United States. On the contrary, it generates and supports jobs. There is scarcely any difference between cheap Mexican labor used in the United States and that which is used in Mexico. They are the same companies, the same bosses, and the same workers. The difference is that the Mexican workers on the "other side," in the U.S., have jobs but no "permission to work," whereas in Mexico they have "permission" but no jobs.

So the problem is not whether workers are undocumented or documented, Mexicans or citizens of the United States. The problem resides in the dynamics and necessities of the U.S. economy. ■

## ...U.S. sets stage

(continued from page 1)

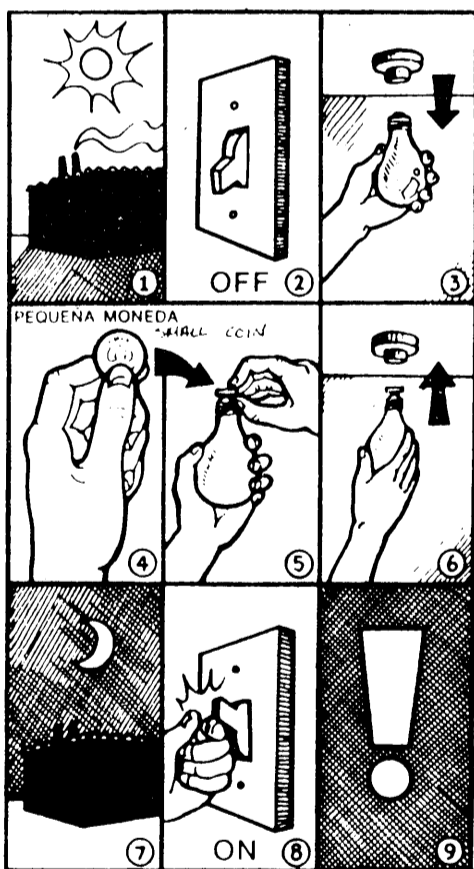
unlikely to provide Nicaragua with advanced weapons. The Nov. 10 *New York Times* quotes an "experienced American official in Managua" who highlights what the Soviet government's actual concerns are. "The Soviet Union has an important bilateral agenda with the United States that includes things like arms control, NATO, and the Warsaw Pact," the official said. "Compared to those matters, Nicaragua is not all that important to them. They are not going to sacrifice the possibility of progress in those other areas in order to get some planes to the Sandinistas."

### Response to elections

The Reagan administration's decision to create a "scare" over the contents of the Soviet freighter's cargo, besides having the objective of winning Congressional support for new funding for the *contras*, was also a response to the Sandinista victory in the Nicaraguan election.

The Nicaraguan elections, in which over 80 percent of those registered voted, demonstrated the broad support that the Sandinistas enjoy. The FSLN received about two-thirds of the vote, while two small capitalist parties, the Independent Liberal Party and the Democratic Conservative Party, received only 10 percent each. Eight percent of the ballots were spoiled or invalid.

The revelations about the U.S. government's involvement in trying to convince opposition candidates to withdraw discredited subsequent U.S. assertions that the elections were a sham. When Jose Arturo Cruz was initially chosen to be the candidate of a pro-capitalist coalition, he had to fly in from Washington, D.C., where he was living, to accept the nomination. After weeks of



Page from CIA comic book distributed in Nicaragua. Drawing shows how to short out a light.

hesitations and negotiations, Cruz withdrew from the elections—apparently under pressure from the Reagan administration.

The Nicaraguan elections have undercut the Reagan administration allegations that the FSLN government is a dictatorship. The FSLN granted full democratic rights to all who did not take up arms against it; it allowed political groups to organize, hold rallies, and contest elections. The FSLN did all of this despite daily attacks by the *contras* and increasing pressures from imperialism and thereby demonstrated the method through which it has been able to retain its widespread support. ■

## Pinochet lashes out as opposition mounts

By NANCY GRUBER

As in a recurring nightmare, the soccer stadiums of Chile are again being pressed into a service for which they were never intended. In a move reminiscent of his deadly 1973 roundup, General Augusto Pinochet ordered the arrest of thousands of men and teen-age boys in police raids of two poor Santiago suburbs during the last month. Of those rounded up, 392 have been sent into internal exile in remote southern villages.

The detained people were described as "subversives" and "habitual delinquents" by a government spokesman, who also claimed that caches of arms and explosives were found. But according to *The Christian Science Monitor* of Nov. 13, leaders in Silva Henríquez, one of the raided shantytowns, say that the weapons were brought in by the police for a staged "discovery" filmed by state television.

Repressive moves by the government have increased drastically since a state of siege was declared by Pinochet on Nov. 6. The new diktat came in response to the 11th National Day of Protest and the one-day general strike of October 29, which paralyzed the near totality of the nation's economy. During those protests, seven people were killed and dozens injured at the hands of the special police.

The president was freed to extend his despotic rule by the resignation of his

cabinet on Nov. 5. Secretary-General Alfonso Marquez de la Plata, in announcing the resignations, said that the action had been taken "so that the president can take whatever decisions he believes necessary."

The first of these decisions was a ban on political meetings and on the distribution of opposition and church-sponsored political news. The renewed censorship has closed six of Chile's most popular magazines.

Along with the worsening human rights situation has come a constantly deteriorating economy. The devaluation of the peso in September was followed by rising inflation, which reached 8 percent in October alone. According to *The Christian Science Monitor* (Nov. 13), one-fourth of the workforce remains jobless or on government make-work programs that pay less than \$40 per month.

The Catholic Church added its voice to the growing chorus of resistance in late November. After a Spanish priest who headed the Chilean church's human rights office was prevented from returning from a visit to Rome, the Archbishop of Santiago called a day of prayer and fasting to protest "subversive" and "repressive" violence.

Pinochet has weathered several earlier crises, but the growing mass opposition, which took a qualitative leap forward in November, is putting his continued ability to rule into question. ■





## An insightful look at sex roles

By ARTHUR MAGLIN

*The Hearts of Men: American Dreams and the Flight from Commitment*, by Barbara Ehrenreich. Anchor Books, 206 pp., \$5.95 (paper).

In "The Hearts of Men," Barbara Ehrenreich has produced a pioneering and provocative study of the change that has taken place in the relations between men and women in the last 30 years. She raises new questions and offers some thoughtful answers. At the same time, there is a curiously top-down approach in her view of the way history is made.

Ehrenreich shows that accompanying the women's revolt against the homemaker role in the family was a simultaneous revolt by men against the breadwinner role. The American dream of the 1950s required that a man get married, support his wife and children, buy a home, and tolerate his work no matter how stifling.

Since the '50s, however, this image of normal manhood has been shattered. Men now feel they have other options—to stay single, to get divorced, to *not* have children, to "allow" their wives to work. In short, men no longer feel obliged to be breadwinners.

### Traditional male role

Ehrenreich attempts to explain *how* this happened. First, she contends, there were the "gray-flannel dissidents" who questioned the emptiness of the corporate rat race in the 1950s but who offered only *conscious* conformity as an alternative to *unconscious* conformity. Then came *Playboy* maga-

zine, which promoted a macho, single image as its alternative to the breadwinner ethic. In the same decade appeared the Beat rebellion with its vigorous denunciation—for men—of both work and marriage.

In the 1960s the medical establishment and the media promoted the notion that the typical corporate ladder-climber—an ambitious, single-minded, workaholic man—was making himself more prone to heart attacks through his type-A personality. At the same time, the new psychology eschewed conformity in favor of personal growth, and the counterculture began a drift toward androgyny and away from traditional masculinity.

Finally, in the 1970s, the human potential movement and the men's liberation movement directly assaulted the deficiencies in the traditional male role.

Ehrenreich does a thorough job of compiling and analyzing her source material. But her limited methodology makes her miss what is really most essential. She argues that the change in traditionally male modes of thinking occurred *primarily* as a revolt against the breadwinner role in the family.

She further posits that this revolt was led by the "middle class" spokesmen for the capitalist class or, as she prefers to call this middle layer, the "professional-managerial class."

Thus, Ehrenreich finds an adequate explanation for this profound social change in a 30-year intellectual history of just one segment of the establishment.

What would be an alternative way of viewing the reversals in male attitudes about themselves and about women? We can begin by looking at the male

revolt as happening from the bottom up rather than from the top down, as Ehrenreich does. We can assume that the same forces that were shaping the female revolt and which produced the women's liberation movement did not leave men untouched. Finally, we can show that the male revolt has been about the whole masculine role and not solely about the breadwinner ethic, which is only a small part of everything that has been put up for question.

### Social movements alter roles

Let's examine some of these forces. The late 1950s and early 1960s saw the rise of the civil rights and ban-the-bomb movements, involving many thousands of people. In both of these movements non-violent civil disobedience played a prominent role, and a new image of courage, one that was not "two-fisted," was projected. Both men *and* women participated in these movements, taking equal risks. In the civil rights movement, both men and women were violently assaulted and sometimes killed.

The antiwar movement of the 1960s and 1970s led to a generalized questioning of the society as a whole and all of its conformist mores. This questioning gave impetus to the feminist movement, the gay liberation movement, and the environmentalist movements. It led, in the 1980s, to new disarmament and antiwar movements.

The feminist and gay movements, of course, directly attacked the established gender roles. But the antiwar and disarmament movements *imply* that the "Be a Marine" image of masculinity has something drastically wrong with it. The environmentalist movement implies that concern, a traditionally female response, is a more intelligent way to deal with the world than stoic reserve, a traditionally male response.

It is no surprise that when mass movements put people into motion, that activity will have a reflection within the establishment. One segment will try to oppose it and another section will try to coopt it. Ehrenreich believes that she has shown how the establishment has changed men because some of its members were discontented. What she has in fact shown, and shown well, is the reflection within the establishment of the pressures from below as a segment of the establishment moved to contain, refashion, and profit from this revolution in the way men viewed themselves and their roles in life.

### Divide and rule

Her concentration on the breadwinner ethic stems from her concentration on the bourgeois reflection of the revolt and not on the forces in motion below. In allegedly giving men permission not to be breadwinners anymore, the capitalist class was really covering up its need for cheap labor—women's labor.

In 1965 women made up 39.3 percent of the year-round, full-time work force. In 1984 the figure is 53.5 percent (these and the following statistics are from *U.S. News and World Report*, Aug. 6, 1984). These figures do not so much imply that men should no longer feel that they need to support women, as that women should support themselves—at low wages. The latest statistics (for 1982) show the median income for men to be \$28,030 and the median for women, \$17,405. Once again, divide and rule.

Despite some ambivalence, in her conclusion Ehrenreich argues that social solutions must be sought for these problems. She is on target when she proposes the increase of women's wages and the provision of adequate social supports such as high quality day care, satisfactory job training facilities, and adequate government income support. This, as a part of a program of struggle, would of course benefit men as well as women.

She also proposes that the money for the social programs should come from increasing corporate taxes and decreasing the military budget. There is, of course, no argument on my part with this. But Ehrenreich does not consider the implications of this proposal. Capitalism will fight tooth and nail against this program because it threatens the very foundations of its social structure—profits—and its ability to make the world safe for plutocracy. ■

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# The Black Experience

## Berlin Conference revisited

By KWAME M.A. SOMBURU

Nov. 15, 1984, marked the 100th anniversary of the Berlin Conference. The conference was convened by 13 European nations and the United States for the purpose of amicably discussing the partition and exploitation of Africa's peoples and resources. Upon completion of the conference formalities, some of those nations—such as England, France, Germany, and Portugal—made their partition of Africa a reality by means of brutal military conquests that lasted until the 1920s.

Historian Sir Harry H. Johnston, who served as a British administrator around the turn of the century, reflected the point of view of the Berlin Conference in his book, *The Colonization of Africa*. Johnston wrote, "We will take the best parts of Africa for ourselves—the highlands in Kenya, North Africa, and Southern Africa. . . . In the future we will have a Black man with a white man's brain, he will be trained under different civilizations. . . . he won't have any national language of his own."

The role of observer that was generally played by the United States during the Berlin Conference has been significantly reversed since the end of World War II. Both Republican and Democratic administrations aided the Europeans to suppress African liberation movements in Angola, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, and other countries. The United States helped to overthrow progressive African governments, kill their leaders (such as Congolese Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba in 1961), and install neo-colonial regimes in their place.

The United States is currently considering the Seychelles Islands off of Africa's east coast for a possible Grenada-type action. The Seychelles government, which took power in 1977, is seeking some independence from the imperialist orbit and is accepting aid from the Soviet Union and its allies. According to the Nov. 19 issue of *Business Week*, the Seychelles represent a threat to Western oil supply routes and to the U.S. naval base 600 miles away on the island of Diego Garcia.

"The events in the Seychelles are a microcosm of a problem dogging U.S. strategy worldwide," *Business Week* states. "The United States and its Western allies, which long ago gave up old-style political imperialism, either stand back and watch. . . or call the fire brigades, as they did in Grenada when the strategic threat to U.S. and Western interests grew too strong. There are at least a half-dozen potential Grenadas around the world."

Massive opposition to this government's reactionary plans—both in this country and world-wide—must be the perspective for U.S. Blacks, the labor movement, and our other allies in struggle. ■

## Inside out...

### Bell of invincibility

By MICHAEL SCHREIBER

Former guru to the Beatles, Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, has proclaimed Ferdinand Marcos and his wife, Imelda, the "founding father and mother" of the "age of enlightenment."

At a September meeting at the presidential palace in Manila, the enlightened dictator rang the Maharishi bell of invincibility as he welcomed the movement's "world renowned scientists" to the Philippines. Marcos endorsed the Maharishi's "unified field technology," which it is claimed—practiced at the beginning and end of each day—can create a problem-free life, reverse the aging process. . . . and "avert typhoons and other natural disasters."

Whenever peasants gather to swap tales and gossip, says the *China Daily*, they speak of Yu Deshui, one of the bold folk heroes who is leading their country's "rush to prosperity."

Yu's heroic business sense first came to light while viewing a film about an incident in 1936 in which dictator Chiang Kai-shek was taken prisoner. What impressed Yu most about the film were the khaki uniforms worn by the actors. He patriotically placed an order for the khaki at a silk mill and in three months netted a profit in sales of about \$12,000. Yu's advice to China's youth? "Time means money," he says.

TV soap operas have become gentrified. No longer need today's Young Upwardly Mobiles merely contemplate the good life on the Betamax. This New Year's Eve they'll be steppin' out in top hats, mink stoles, tuxedos, suspenders, shoes, and underwear inscribed with the brand name of their favorite TV heartthrobber.

Chuck Ashman, the executive at 20th Century Fox who is in charge of marketing such Yuppish delights as a Dynasty-brand porcelain doll, fully clothed and perfumed for \$10,000, points out that "people won't think they're paying extra for this. They'll think they're buying something they'd buy anyway, and get the fantasy as a bonus. An extra bang for the buck."

What's new for Christmas? We hear that the General Services Administration is selling an extra-heavy-duty mailbox that is guaranteed to withstand a thermonuclear bomb blast—or your money back. ■

# A story that is out of this world

By LARRY COOPERMAN

*The Brother from another Planet*, a film by John Sayles.

It is very rare that a movie can be so thoroughly political, so transparent in its message, and yet be so uncompromising in its adherence to artistic principles. Through humor and originality, "Brother from another Planet," John Sayles' latest film, succeeds in presenting a stinging indictment of racism in the United States.

The "brother" is a runaway slave from another planet whose spaceship crashes on Ellis Island. He makes his way to Harlem eventually, and, after a few initial comic mishaps, he learns

## MOVIE REVIEW

basic Earth customs, finds a place to stay, and gets a job—all without being able to speak. His extraterrestrial abilities—he can heal wounds and fix electronic gadgets with a touch of his hand—help him surmount his other difficulties.

The two intertwined plots in this film deal with his fight to escape two white extraterrestrial cops (one played by John Sayles) and his attempt to come to grips with the social reality of Harlem (he goes after a white businessman who is making money by supplying heroin

to Blacks in Harlem). The weaving together of these two plots is done so skillfully that the obvious parallels between the situation of Blacks in the United States and his situation as a fugitive from oppression do not intrude on the story that is being told.

Sayles has considerably improved his craft since his earliest success, "The Return of the Secaucus Seven."

Still a master of low-budget filmmaking, he uses New York City, particularly Harlem, as an inexpensive backdrop. The parade of characters that wander through this film—ranging from welfare department bureaucrats to Rastrafarians—capture the feeling of New York life.

The film is consistently funny and it utilizes its humor to make much of its social commentary. In one scene on a New York subway, the "brother" is shown an elaborate card trick by a street-wise card shark. At the 59th Street stop on the A-train (next stop is 125th Street in Harlem), he says to the "brother," "Want to see another trick? I can make all the white people disappear."

Above all, "Brother from Another Planet" points, unequivocally and without embarrassment, to the bonds of solidarity that become the only protection for this fugitive from slavery. This quality alone makes the film stand out from the usual quasi-political offerings that periodically come out of Hollywood. ■

# Larry Stewart: 1921-1984

The following are major portions of a statement commemorating the life of Larry Stewart that appears in the December 1984 issue of *The Bulletin in Defense of Marxism (BIDOM)*, a publication of the Fourth Internationalist Tendency. The FIT is a group of expelled members of the Socialist Workers Party.

The editors of *Socialist Action* join the editorial board of *BIDOM* in saluting the 45-year contribution of Larry Stewart to the SWP and to the labor and Black liberation movements. We will greatly miss our friend and comrade.—THE EDITORS

By the editorial board of BIDOM

Larry Stewart of Newark, N.J., a member of the editorial board of *The Bulletin in Defense of Marxism* died of cancer on Nov. 16 at the Sloan-Kettering Memorial Hospital in New York City. He was 63 years old and had been actively engaged in building the revolutionary Marxist, labor, and Black movements since he was 18.

His death marks a real loss for those movements. His sober judgement and advice, his rich experience under all kinds of conditions, and his militant example will be sadly missed at a time when the workers and their allies need leadership more than ever before.

### A life of struggle

Larry Stewart was born to a poor Black working-class family in Milford, Conn., and spent part of his youth in foster and orphan homes. His formal education had to stop at high school for economic reasons. In 1939 he joined the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) in New Haven and subsequently moved to Newark because it was easier to find a factory job there.

He remained in Newark for the rest of his life except during World War II when he was first a merchant seaman and then was drafted into the army.

Among the jobs he held in the following years were steelworker, laborer, electrical worker, and truck driver. He belonged at different times to CIO, AFL, and independent unions, including the United Steelworkers, the United Electrical Workers, and the Teamsters. He also experienced plenty of unemployment

when the economy turned down after the war and was on strike several times.

In 1941 he was a leading activist in the Newark contingent of the March on Washington Movement, an all-Black group that fought against racism in industry and the armed forces. After the war he was active in the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and local committees against police brutality. He defended the Black community against repression during the "Newark riots" of 1967. He also tried to help the National Black Independent Political Party (NBIPP) in New Jersey when it was organized in 1981.

### Opposed SWP's new course

Stewart was an enthusiastic supporter of the SWP's decision in 1978 to send most of its members into industry, but he became troubled by the mechanical and schematic way in which it was implemented. By the time of the 1981 SWP convention, he felt that the party leadership was going off-course in its attitude toward the Castroist current in Cuba. He later found himself in sympathy with the positions of the Fourth Internationalist Caucus in the National Committee.

Shortly after retiring from his job with a physical disability he suffered a heart attack in 1983. He was on a leave of absence from the Newark branch, but that did not save him from the axe of the political purge inside the SWP in January 1984. He was expelled without a trial he could attend, on fraudulent charges that he was a "splitter" and "secret factionalist."

Stewart then helped to organize the Fourth Internationalist Tendency and became a member of the editorial board of its journal, *The Bulletin in Defense of Marxism. BIDOM*, no. 5 (April 1984), printed his appeal to the SWP against his expulsion; no. 7 (May) contained his analysis of NBIPP; no. 8 (June) had his "Open Letter to Mel Mason," indignantly protesting his exclusion from a public SWP campaign rally.

We send condolences to Vera Stewart, his wife, and Paul, his son. We will never forget him and the cause to which he devoted most of his life. His example is a source of strength to us who knew him personally. ■

# Being homeless in America

By HAYDEN PERRY

Like the pavement dwellers in the streets of Calcutta, the homeless are an enduring part of America's cities. So enduring that Federal Judge Mary Johnson Lowe ruled in New York City on Oct. 9 that homelessness should not bar a citizen's right to vote. Subsequently, over 400 homeless who gave such addresses as a park bench, the post office steps, or the warm air grating on the 400 block of 3rd Avenue were added to the voters' rolls for the last election.

In introducing a two-volume study of the homeless in New York state, Governor Mario Cuomo declared, "The homeless are a permanent institutionalized part of our population."

Denying that the average homeless person is a misfit or alcoholic, Cuomo declared, "Homelessness is overwhelmingly caused by poverty, not pathology. Our main conclusion is that homelessness is by its nature a crisis of housing."

It is estimated that over 20,000 people sleep in the streets, on park benches, or in bus terminals in New York City every night.

The U.S. Army is riding to the rescue of the homeless. Under a Pentagon "Shelters for the Homeless Program," unused barracks are being renovated at bases around the country to house the homeless. Denver, Boston, San Diego, and Orange County, Calif., are among a growing number of communities that are using army facilities for emergency housing. Other cities have rejected the bases because they don't want "that class of people" in their neighborhoods.

Among the bases being renovated for the homeless is Camp Parks in Alameda County, Calif. A contract was signed several months ago with the Salvation Army to run the shelter. Now the Salvation Army has abruptly pulled out of the project. They said they were not aware that the base had been used for nuclear experiments after World War II. Costs for decontamination could run up to \$250,000.

If the officers of the Salvation Army have only now learned about the radiation problem at Parks they have not been reading the right paper. *Socialist*



Structures erected by GSA to keep homeless from sleeping on heating grates in Washington, D.C.—News item

*Action* reported on the nuclear pollution problem at the base in its March 1984 issue—eight months ago.

A literal life-or-death battle has been waged with the administration on behalf of Washington's homeless. Mitch Snyder, a leader of the Community for Creative Non-Violence, has been running a shelter for the people on the street not far from the White House. The homeless are camped in a squalid abandoned federal building.

For months Snyder pleaded in vain

for funds to make the building habitable. On Sept. 15 he started a hunger strike to force action by the Reagan administration. They let Snyder waste away without food for 51 days without offering a single penny.

Suddenly the White House yielded, offering to renovate the building if Snyder would end his fast. The White House hotly denied that the change of heart was due to the impending election or the appearance of Snyder and his cause before millions of voters on the "60 Minutes" television show.

Some residents of a California town have expressed their dislike of the homeless by vigilante action. Gangs of young males in Santa Cruz have cornered transients and beaten them up, yelling "Off the streets, trolls!" They nickname the homeless "trolls" because they are often found sleeping under bridges.

A local store printed a T-shirt with the slogan "Troll Busters" and a picture of a seedy-looking transient. Three thousand were sold in three weeks. It was an expression of the town's attitude toward the homeless, said one resident.

Attacks on transients started in December 1983 when three high school students attacked a taxi driver with a homemade bazooka. They said they were out "troll hunting."

They described trolls as "long-haired hippies, commies, and transients."

Since then there have been intermittent attacks on the homeless. Nineteen were reported injured in July 1984, including one who was thrown over a cliff. Many other attacks were not reported.

The police have made no arrests. They deny that there is a transient-bashing campaign. However, Sgt. Bill Aluffi, who has investigated the assaults, declared, "I have been here 17 years and have never seen anything like this."

There are two socialists on the Santa Cruz City Council, but they have not been able to stop the assaults on the homeless. The Council has voted to join the local branch of the University of California in a study of the problem of transients.

Some of the homeless, among them several Vietnam veterans, are preparing to defend themselves. They say the troll busters could find themselves in a "nasty little war."

Behind the troll busters are the big property owners who want to make Santa Cruz a resort for the rich. People sleeping under bridges spoil the image of carefree affluence they want to create. They believe the troll-busting campaign will drive the unwelcome homeless out of the city.

## Socialist Action holds first national convention in S.F.

By ALAN BENJAMIN

SAN FRANCISCO—On Nov. 22-25 Socialist Action held its first national convention here with over 140 members and guests in attendance from 20 states across the country.

The convention marked the tremendous growth and development of Socialist Action in its brief one year existence and charted the course for the organization in the period ahead. Fifty delegates hotly debated counterposed political resolutions that had been under discussion in the branches of Socialist Action for the past three months. Following a fully democratic discussion and vote, a new national committee was elected on the basis of the documents adopted by the majority of the delegates at the convention.

The convention decided that a major priority for Socialist Action in the coming months is to help build a broad, mass-action movement against U.S. intervention in Central America. The April national antiwar demonstrations were seen as a major opportunity to

mobilize hundreds of thousands of working people in the streets in opposition to the U.S. war moves against the Nicaraguan revolution.

Convention delegates also stressed the need to deepen our participation in the labor struggles and to advance a program of independent political action—a labor party based on the unions—in the period ahead. Over the past year, members of Socialist Action have played a key role in five major labor battles—either through direct participation or by helping to build labor solidarity.

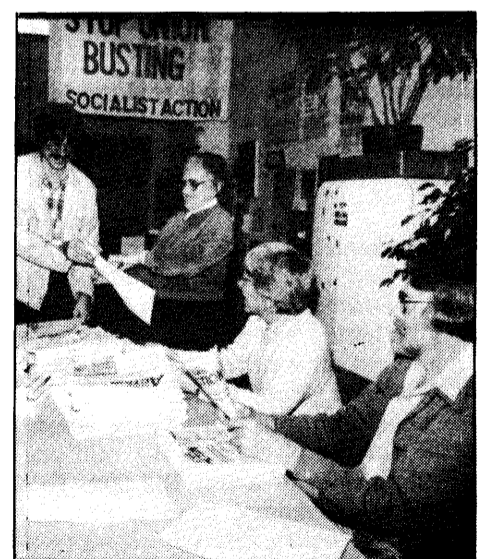
The first national convention also reaffirmed the organization's status as a public faction of the Socialist Workers Party. While functioning in all other respects as a party (newspaper, forums, active involvement in the mass movement), this means Socialist Action members would accept their reintegration into the SWP with their full democratic rights and the immediate opening of a discussion of the political differences which led to their expulsion from the SWP. Socialist Action believes it is nec-

essary—and still possible—to reverse the revisionist course imposed on the party by the current SWP leadership.

The revolutionary continuity of Socialist Action was underscored by the composition of the participants at the convention. Eleven founding members of the SWP were present (six of them were full delegates); two others could not attend for health reasons. Of those in attendance 37% were union members, 14% were students, and 83% had been in the SWP (their average time in the SWP was 15.5 years).

Four international guests were present at the gathering, including a representative from the United Secretariat of the Fourth International. Greetings were heard from the newly formed Alliance for Socialist Action in Canada, as well as the Mexican Revolutionary Workers Party (PRT), and the Fourth Internationalist Tendency (USA).

The convention hailed the one-year anniversary of *Socialist Action* newspaper and voted to take the measures necessary to increase the circulation of the



Socialist Action/May May Gong

press. A modest goal of 150 new subscriptions in the next two months was approved by the delegates.

Finally, the convention noted that 116 new members had joined Socialist Action since our founding conference last October. Enthusiastic about the prospects of rebuilding a dynamic revolutionary Marxist organization in the tradition of James P. Cannon, the founder of the Trotskyist movement in this country, a number of the guests at the first convention asked to join Socialist Action.