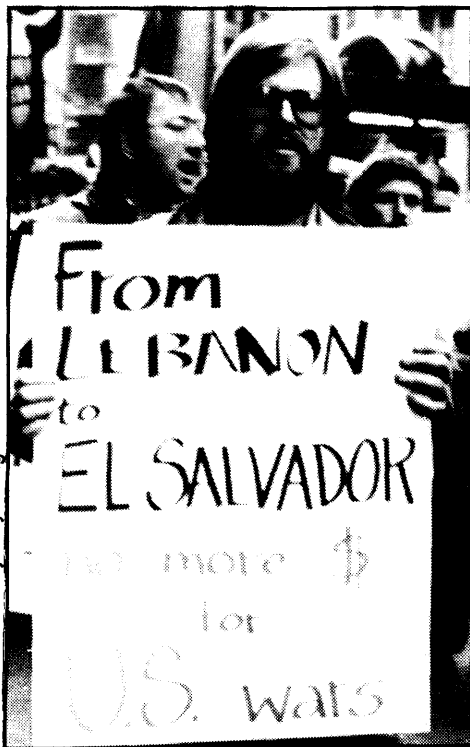


# A Socialist ACTION

Elections  
in Chicago:  
See pp. 4-5.



MARCH 1987 VOL. 5, NO.3 50 CENTS



Socialist Action/May Gong

## April actions target U.S. war drive

By MICHAEL SCHREIBER

Every day, new evidence comes to light revealing the U.S. government's headlong drive toward war.

The White House brought this country to the brink of war in Libya, government officials admitted last month. Early last year, President Reagan approved a secret directive authorizing American military strikes in support of a "pre-emptive" Egyptian attack on Libya.

According to *The New York Times*, the Joint Chiefs of Staff were asked to draw up several contingency plans to support an Egyptian invasion of Libya. One of the plans called for the landing of thousands of American troops. But Egypt was unwilling to participate in the action, reports said.

Forced to proceed on its own, the White House ordered U.S. warplanes to bomb the Libyan capital in April 1986. The primary goal of the bombing was the assassination of Col. Muammar Qaddafi, according to the Feb. 22 *New York Times*. Secret plans for an even deadlier attack on Libya are still in the hopper, CBS television reports.

At the same time, the administration is considering sending U.S. troops to Nicaragua if the contras prove incapable of overthrowing the Nicaraguan government.

In a major policy statement delivered before the American Bar Association last month, Secretary of State George Shultz urged Congress to release \$105 million in additional aid to the contras so that "we may avoid direct military involvement by the United States in the future."

But the Iran/contra arms scandal has made it difficult for Congress to justify granting any more military aid. Noting that the contra leaders are tied to numerous reports of atrocities, drug-running, and corruption, Washington has urged them to revamp their image.

The American people, however, are not easily fooled by the government's coverups and lies. According to the latest polls, the

(continued on page 3)

# Immigration law strikes at rights of all workers

By ROBIN DAVID

SAN FRANCISCO—The age of Big Brother may truly be upon us. But it is not coming from some alleged Soviet takeover of the United States, as the Cold War ABC mini-series, "Amerika," would have us believe.

Last November, Congress passed the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, better known as the Simpson-Rodino Law. This new law extends an icy finger into the life of every single worker in the United States.

The immigration law's stated purpose is to "regain control of the U.S. borders" by making it impossible for undocumented immigrants to live and work in this country. The law is aimed at keeping out millions of workers and their families who are forced to come here to escape poverty and/or political repression.

But the new law is also part of a clamping down on the civil liberties and democratic rights of all working people.

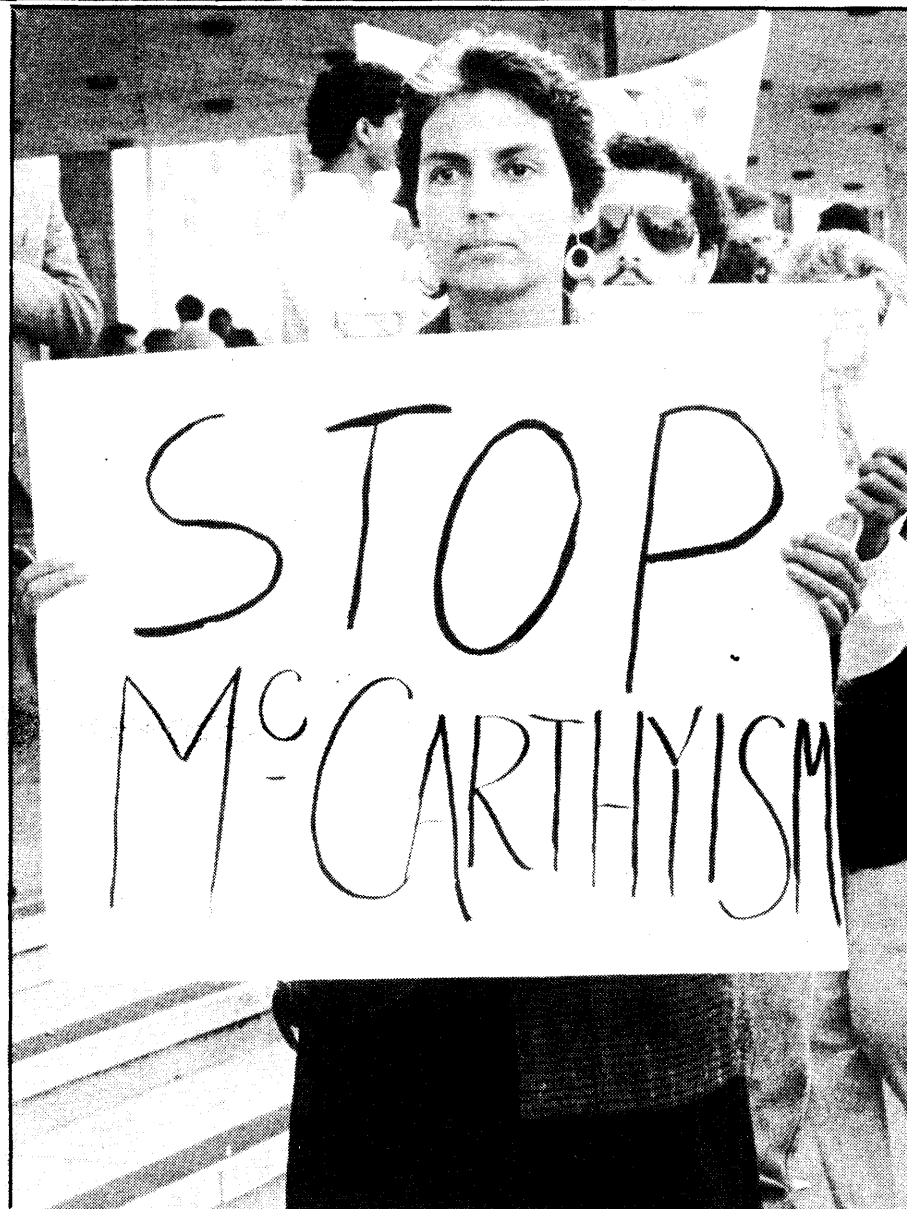
The rules being proposed to administer the new immigration law give stark reality to what Congress and the Reagan administration mean by "immigration reform."

The proposed rules require that every job applicant, citizen or not, produce documents establishing identity and work authorization. The new law makes it "unlawful for an employer to knowingly hire an alien who is not authorized to work," according to a summary of the law by the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF). The law provides stiff sanctions against employers who hire or continue employing "unauthorized aliens."

Employers must verify the job applicant's documents within 24 hours and then keep a record for an extended period of time. Anyone who knowingly uses fraudulent immigration or identification documents for purposes of complying with the verification requirements is subject to a fine and/or imprisonment for up to two years.

Certainly, faced with criminal penalties and a 24-hour deadline, few employers would bother to hire anyone about whom they had the slightest doubt. According to

## INS raids target Palestinians



Socialist Action/Kathleen Onan

Demonstrators in Los Angeles on Feb. 17 protest INS round-up of activists in Palestinian movement. See story on page 6.

ACLU field representative Marcia Gallo, "Not only will undocumented immigrants be under much greater pressure, but all

people of color, those who speak with an accent, and anyone who doesn't look 'American' will face increased job discrimination."

This rule will also have a much broader impact. The only truly verifiable document will be a federally issued identity card, an internal passport, or perhaps a South African-style passbook. A national computer bank would have to be set up.

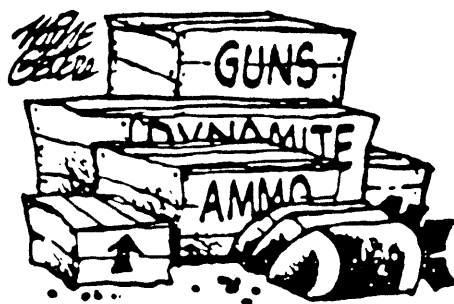
The Jan. 1, 1987, *San Francisco Chronicle* reported that already "special phones to allow employers to identify holders of Social Security cards [have been] installed in a pilot program in El Paso, Corpus Christi, and Dallas." Everybody's work history will become a matter of government interest.

Debbie Lin of the Asian Law Caucus, one of the groups long active in defense of immigrant rights in San Francisco, called this proof-of-identity provision "an incredible intrusion into people's lives."

The new law was passed with bipartisan

(continued on page 7)

## US. AID TO CENTRAL AMERICANS



LEGAL



ILLEGAL

Lessons of Vietnam antiwar movement, See pp. 9-12.

## 'Grandmaw' and the Middletown strike



By SYLVIA WEINSTEIN

In the February issue of *Socialist Action* there was a story on Middletown, Ohio, and the workers there at Armco Steel who are fighting for decent working conditions. Middletown was my hometown, and the story brought back many memories from my youth.

I moved to Middletown in 1935, when I was nine years old. It was a real working-class town, quite different from Lexington, Ky., where I was born and lived until we moved "north." In Kentucky, there was no work except in tobacco warehouses or around race horses.

My father's first job in Middletown was at the Sorg Pulp and Paper Mill. Today's environmentalists would have declared the Sorg Paper Mill a disaster area. You could smell the chlorine a mile away.

After two years at Sorg's, my father landed one of the most coveted jobs in Middletown—at Armco Steel Mill. Armco had the reputation of being the best employer in town.

My father believed every word of Armco's benevolent repu-

tation. Dad would work any amount of time that was demanded of him. The company did pay better wages than other jobs in Middletown and also had classes for its workers so they could upgrade their skills.

My father started in the furnace, worked up to the roller mill, and finally landed a position as a metallurgist after taking classes at Armco. He loved his work and brought it home with him—always telling about the day's events on the job and especially his new skills.

Armco owned the local ball park and sponsored its own team. The company gave a yearly Easter-egg hunt in Variety Park for the children of the town. It was said that Armco owned the cops, too. And, the story went, if a "good" Armco man got in trouble, the company could get him off.

My father was very impressed by all this. But his romance with Armco—and capitalism—did not extend to the rest of the family. Quite the opposite.

### My Grandmaw

My step-grandmother worked for the P. Lorillard Tobacco Company in Middletown. One of their products was Old Plug Chewing Tobacco (which Grandmaw used). She thought smoking was undignified, but she kept a wad of Old Plug in her cheek all the time.

Mine and my step-mother's families came from the hills of Kentucky: Lee County, Wolf County, and "Bloody" Breath County. (It was called bloody because of what the mine owners

did to the miners to try to stop the union.)

Many of my family were miners. Some worked in the lumber mills and—when times really got tough—some of them took to bootlegging. They were also believers in the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO). As far as they were concerned, the only person (besides Jesus) who could walk on water was John L. Lewis, who was heading up the CIO at that time.

### They walked

Grandmaw helped organize the tobacco workers into the CIO in



Middletown. Her boss at P. Lorillard got wind that some secret union organizing was going on. He came up to Grandmaw and told her he wanted to talk this over with her and the other union organizers.

The boss said it in a friendly voice, so Grandmaw and four other union militants went to his office to discuss the union. Then he had the "ringleaders" right where he wanted them. He told her and the others to get their belongings, get out of the plant, and never come back.

As Grandmaw was walking out, she jumped upon a big tobacco basket and told the other workers that she and the four militants had been fired for organizing a union. She explained that everyone else had a choice of staying or walking out too. The workers walked. There was a long and bitter strike.

The strikers organized a kitchen near the factory, where all workers and their families could get breakfast, lunch, and dinner. She put me to work washing dishes, cleaning tables, and doing whatever else was needed. They collected food from churches, grocery stores, and from farmers in the surrounding area. No one went hungry during that strike.

After a long hot summer, the strike ended in complete victory for the union. I remember the ending. The governor had called in the National Guard against the strikers. It was a hot, humid day when they came. The street in front of the tobacco plant was lined with workers and their families. They had the street completely blocked from wall to wall.

I was standing in the front line with Grandmaw and the other leaders of the strike. They were facing open panel trucks loaded with armed National Guardsmen. One of the guardsmen looked down on her and said: "You better move these people out, old lady, or we're going to run right over you."

Grandmaw looked him in the eye and said: "Young man, I've put diapers on people your age. So you just come right on, we're not moving." After about an hour

of this standoff, we heard a big cheer from the back of the trucks—the guard was moving out. Grandmaw and her co-workers had won.

### The next lesson

That was my first lesson about which side I was on. The next lesson came shortly thereafter. I came home from school to find my step-mother and my father in an argument. He was in the bedroom packing a bag of clothes. There was a rumor that Armco was going to be organized and that a "big strike was coming."

The boss had demanded that any worker who wanted to keep his or her job move into the plant and keep it running, strike or no strike. My father was planning to move into Armco. He had his bag packed and was walking down the stairs when my step-mother yelled to him: "If you walk out that door with that suitcase, don't plan on coming back. I will never sleep with a scab."

Dad got as far as the screen door and turned around. He didn't go. It turned out that there was to be no strike, after all. Armco remained a non-union company for a long time.

It has been many years since I've been in Middletown, but I have never forgotten the fighting spirit of the workers in that town. From reading last month's *Socialist Action*, I learned that Armco workers have transformed a company union into a real union. It looks like this new generation of workers will carry on that fighting spirit. ■

## S.F. antiwar action gains momentum

By ADAM WOOD

SAN FRANCISCO—The Western States Mobilization for Peace, Jobs, and Justice is gathering momentum. Tens of thousands of leaflets, posters, and buttons have been printed up and distributed.

Working committees are meeting every other Saturday at the I.L.W.U. Local 6 hall in San Francisco. Close to 100 people have been attending these meetings—taking up the problems of outreach, logistics, finances, media work, and more. In addition to their regular assignments, each of the working committees has taken up the task of holding at least one fund-raising event.

One of these events will be a reception for Nora Astorga, the Nicaraguan ambassador to the United Nations. Astorga will speak in San Francisco on March 19. The proceeds will go to the Mobilization to help publicize the April 25 action.

Regionally, buses are being chartered from Seattle, Phoenix, and Los Angeles. In addition, a boat will be bringing marchers from Hawaii. Representatives from the Mobilization are being sent to each of these areas to help organizers there coordinate activities.

The labor movement has given this action unprecedented support. When asked what the significance of labor participation was in the April 25 actions, Tom Rankin, research director for the California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO, replied, "It shows a continuation of our concern over our nation's foreign policy."

The national coalition organizing the



Washington, D.C., April 25 demonstration officially voted to endorse the Western States Mobilization even though the Mobilization has four demands—as opposed to two in the case of the Washington action.

The reason for this endorsement is the three-year record of the San Francisco-based Mobilization, the political breadth of the coalition, and its widespread labor support.

The Mobilization office has been packed with six elected staff and many volunteers. But more volunteers are needed for tabling in the communities, fund-raising, and monitoring the event. To contact the office, call (415) 626-8053, or write to Mobilization, 255 Ninth St., San Francisco, CA 94103. ■

## Los Angeles coalition builds S.F. protest

By KATHLEEN O'NAN

LOS ANGELES—The Southern California area has a number of events coming up that will help build the April 25 mobilization in San Francisco.

Various religious organizations which have endorsed the April 25 action have called for a demonstration on April 4 in honor of the anniversary of Martin Luther King's 1967 speech at Riverside Church in

New York. For more information, call the Southern Christian Leadership Conference: 213-295-8582.

The Southern California Mobilization on Central America is also organizing buses and carpools to go up to San Francisco for April 25. Round trip cost is \$30, and checks should be made out to Mobilization on Central America, P.O. Box 57337, Los Angeles, CA 90057. For more information call CISPES at (213) 225-6136. ■

# New York

By PETER ATWOOD

NEW YORK—On Jan. 28, some 150 activists met at the offices of the Hospital and Healthcare Workers union, District 1199, to launch the New York Mobilization for Justice and Peace in Central America and South Africa.

The meeting was chaired by Leslie Cagan, national staff director of the Washington march. Cagan explained the need to maintain the focus on the two central demands of the national coalition, while at the same time recognizing the need to address other related issues.

The New York Mobilization has added the demands of "Jobs, not War," "End the Arms Race," and "No more Howard Beaches" to the two national demands.

The two keynote speakers at the meeting were Dave Dyson, a leader of the National Labor Committee in Support of Democracy and Human Rights in El Salvador, and Jeff Mackler, a representative of the Western States Mobilization for Peace, Jobs and Justice.

Dyson, who has played a key role in securing labor support for the national march in Washington, D.C., reported on a recent visit he and a delegation of U.S. trade unionists made to Nicaragua.

Dyson described the attempt of a small group of Nicaraguan farmers to defend their land against a sizeable contra attack. The battle ended with the capture and murder of 14 peasants, Dyson said.

"Their throats were cut from ear to ear with machetes shortly before we arrived on the scene," Dyson said. "And we returned to the United States just in time to hear President Reagan say that the contras were the moral equivalent of our founding fathers."

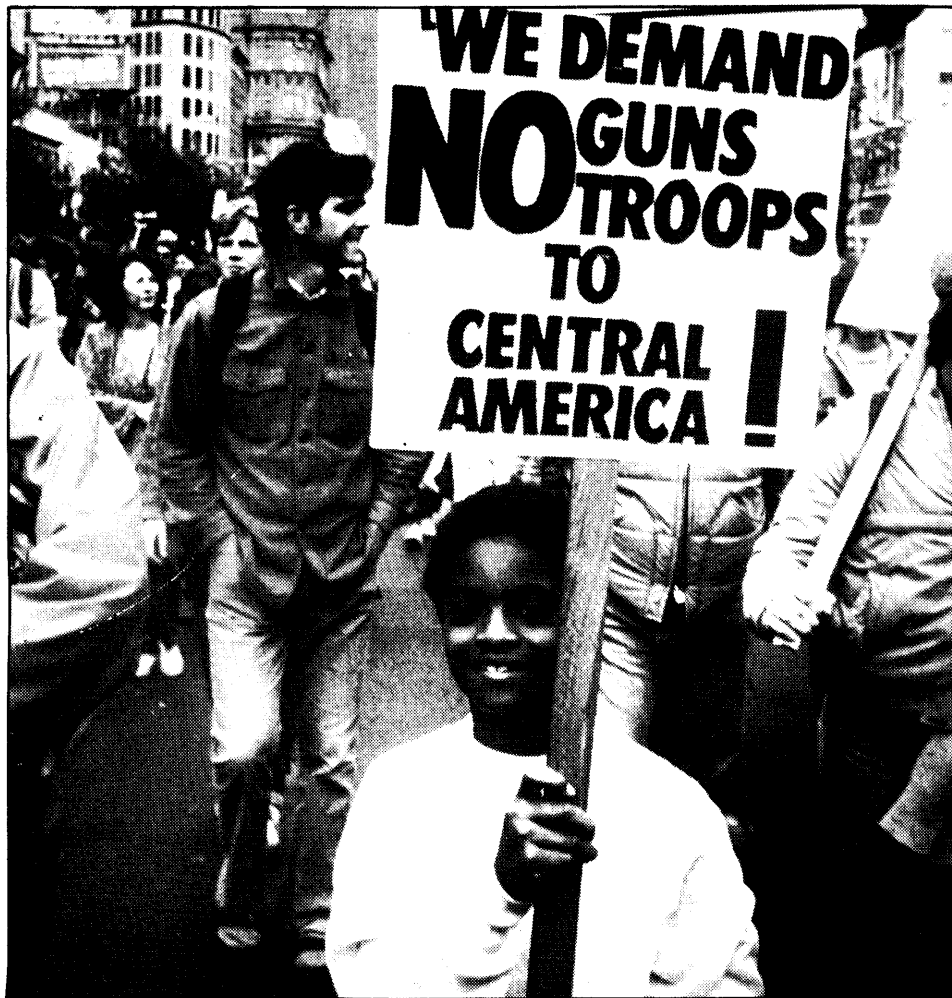
"There's only one way to say 'no' to the U.S./contra war," Dyson said. "It's by organizing the most massive march ever on Washington, D.C."

Dyson noted that the national march had been initiated by the presidents of 19 national unions. "The list includes five of the six largest trade unions in the United States. Together they represent almost 6 million workers," he said.

Mackler presented greetings on behalf of the Mobilization for Peace, Jobs and Justice in San Francisco, which is organizing the official Western states component of the April 25 action.

"The gap between public opposition to funding the contras and to support for apartheid, on the one hand, and U.S. policy, on the other, has never been greater," Mackler said.

Pointing to the unprecedented support of the labor movement for the April 25 demonstrations, Mackler said, "Labor's



## Support builds for April 25 D.C. protest

involvement in this march will not go unnoticed. American workers know that the guns of unemployment, of plant closures, of two-tier pay scales, and of institutionalized racism and sexism are pointed at their heads by the same government that seeks to exploit the people of Central America for the profit of the few."

The New York Mobilization is selling bus tickets to Washington and getting out leaflets and press packets for the demonstration. The next coalition meeting will be on March 3 at the District 1199 offices, 310 W. 43 St., 2nd Floor, New York. For more information call (212) 582-1890 ext. 232.



Dave Dyson (l.) and Jeff Mackler

## Chicago

By CARRIE HEWITT

CHICAGO—Plans for organizing Chicago-area participation in the April 25 mobilization in Washington, D.C., got a big boost as over 100 activists met here on Jan. 24 to form the Chicago April Mobilization Coalition.

The call for the formation of this new coalition was initiated by the Chicago October 25th Coalition, an umbrella group that organized a regional Midwest antiwar demonstration of 2000 people last fall.

Encouraged by the success of the local fall demonstration and the breadth of the national endorsers of the April mobilization, several prominent local religious and labor figures joined with the October 25th Coalition in issuing a letter urging Chicago area activists to support the themes of the national spring march and rally.

Among the signers of this letter were Rev. Clyde H. Brooks, president of the Chicago Metropolitan Chapter of the Southern Christian Leadership Council; Rev. Willie Barrow, national executive director of Operation PUSH; Noel Beasley,

midwest director of the textile division of the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union (ACTWU); and Charles Williams, international representative of the International Association of Machinists.

Participants in the Jan. 24 meeting heard reports from Clarence Lusane of the national coalition for the April Mobilization and from Noel Beasley, who in addition to his position in ACTWU is the chair of the Chicago Labor Committee for Democracy and Human Rights in El Salvador.

Much of the meeting, however, focused on discussion from the floor on the themes of the spring mobilization. Representatives from various groups sharply criticized the national march organizers for omitting demands calling for an end to U.S. intervention in the Middle East and for an end to Star Wars.

Despite the heated floor debate, however, the meeting voted overwhelmingly to form a local coalition in support of the national demands and to begin organizing for the 16-hour trip to Washington, D.C.

A steering committee was established which is open to representatives from each endorsing organization. Rev. Clyde Brooks of SCLC and Marty Quinn of the Evanston Committee on Central America have been elected co-chairs of the coalition, and work committees have begun meeting on a regular basis.

For more information, contact the Chicago April Mobilization Coalition at 343 S. Dearborn Street, Room 1113, Chicago, IL 60604. Phone: (312) 663-1227.

## Boston

By JIM HENLE

BOSTON—The Mobilization for Justice and Peace in Central America and South Africa was launched here last month to build area support for the Spring Mobilization in Washington, D.C.

The coalition's first organizational meeting, held at the SEIU Local 285 union hall on Feb. 12, drew 125 people. Twenty-three labor, church, and community leaders signed the written "Appeal" that called for the meeting.

Signers included Domenic Bozzotto, president, Local 26, Hotel and Restaurant Employees International Union; Douglas Butler, president, Greater Boston A. Philip Randolph Institute; Edward W. Clark Jr.,

international vice president, Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union; and Nancy Finkelstein, president, Massachusetts Teachers Association.

Also among the signers were John J. Flynn, director, Region 9A, United Auto Workers; William J. Foley, director, District 1, United Steelworkers of America; Rev. Charles A. Harper, president, Massachusetts Council of Churches; Mel King; and Joanie Parker, president, Greater Boston Coalition of Labor Union Women.

The new coalition has organized special task forces to reach out to students and the labor movement, among others. The labor task force was initiated by the Massachusetts Labor Committee for Democracy and Human Rights in El Salvador, an affiliate of the National Labor Committee headed by Dave Dyson.

An open coalition meeting will take place on Saturday, March 7, 12 noon, at the Arlington St. Church in Boston. For more information, call CASA at (617) 492-8699 or SANE at (617) 354-2169.

## Twin Cities

By MIKE ZUKOWSKI

MINNEAPOLIS—The Twin Cities Coalition on Central America and South Africa has been meeting on a regular basis to build the April 25 mobilization. Building activities included a Feb. 26 memorial service for El Salvador's Archbishop Oscar Romero and a march to the State Capitol against U.S. intervention in Central America.

The coalition has had success in organizing student support on campuses in the Twin Cities area. The coalition will have membership meetings every two weeks beginning on March 12. For further information, contact the Central America Resource Center, 1701 University Ave. SE, Minneapolis, MN. Phone: (612) 379-8799.

## ...April actions

(continued from page 1)

overwhelming majority oppose aid to the contras and the escalation of U.S. intervention in Nicaragua.

This antiwar sentiment must be organized into a powerful movement in the streets which can stay the hands of the U.S. warmakers.

*Socialist Action* urges our readers to get involved in the building activities for the April 25 demonstrations in Washington, D.C., and San Francisco against U.S. intervention in Central America and against U.S. support to South African apartheid. ■

**Index available for 3 years of Socialist Action**



You can now obtain indexes of *Socialist Action* for 1985, '85, and '86. We're more than a newspaper. As a monthly, we provide in-depth analysis of national and world events. Our articles are still timely. Your index will lead you to articles you may have missed—but shouldn't have. Each yearly index is \$1.50 (includes postage). Order from: Socialist Action, 3435 Army St., Rm. 308, S.F., CA 94110.

**Socialist ACTION**

Closing date: Feb. 23, 1987

Editor: ALAN BENJAMIN  
Asst. Editor: MICHAEL SCHREIBER

Staff: Paul Colvin, Suzanne Forsyth, May May Gong, David Kirschner, Hayden Perry, Joe Ryan, Carole Seligman, Kwame M.A. Somburu, Sylvia Weinstein.

Business Manager: DON MAHONEY

*Socialist Action* (ISSN 0747-4237) is published monthly for \$6 per year by Socialist Action Publishing Association, 3435 Army St., No. 308, San Francisco, CA 94110. Second-class postage is paid at San Francisco, Calif.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Socialist Action, 3435 Army St., No. 308, San Francisco, CA 94110.

RATES: For one year (12 issues)—U.S. 2nd Class: \$6, 1st Class: \$9; Canada and Mexico 2nd Class: \$9, 1st Class: \$12; All other countries 2nd Class: \$12, 1st Class: \$24. (Canada money orders or checks should be in U.S. dollars.)

Signed articles by contributors do not necessarily represent the views of *Socialist Action*. These are expressed in editorials.

## Chicago elections:

# Harold Washington campaign: Long on promises, but short on solutions



The Progressive

By MARK HARRIS and ADAM SHILS

CHICAGO—In 1983 Harold Washington was elected mayor of Chicago, the first Black to achieve that position in the nation's most racially segregated city.

Washington's Democratic Party campaign that year aroused unprecedented enthusiasm among Chicago's Black population. Washington's bid for mayor became for many Blacks more than just another election—it was a vote against racism and an expression of Black pride. With Washington's election victory, it was hoped, the stale air of racism and poverty would at last begin to lift from the Windy City.

How has the struggle for Black equality and social justice in Chicago weathered under the Washington administration? After nearly four years in office, and as Mayor Washington campaigns for re-election on April 7, this is a question worth posing.

Despite a few tangible reform measures, the hopes of 1983 remain unfulfilled. Conditions for the Black population are still terrible—and getting worse. Still, many of Washington's reform-minded measures have proven popular among Blacks and working people, many of whom hold to the hope that the mayor, while unable to tackle such chronic problems as unemployment and poverty, is at least moving in the right direction.

The abuses of the patronage system, for example, under which precinct captains beholden to ward committeemen traded thousands of city jobs for votes, has been severely weakened under Washington.

The mayor has sponsored a Freedom of Information Order that opened city files to public inspection. The slippery deals and greased palms that once oiled the white Democratic City Hall machine no longer occupy the exalted status of semi-official policy. (The financial doings of some Washington aides, however, nevertheless prove that old ways die hard.)

Collective-bargaining agreements have been won for thousands of city workers, replacing the "handshake" agreements of the past. Affirmative action has been promoted in city hiring, and the mayor has supported local civil rights legislation for gays and lesbians.

Funding for emergency shelters and food for the homeless has been increased. The mayor, too, has taken measures to ensure that Black neighborhoods receive equal provision of city services, a not-insignificant step in a city where the Chicago Transit Authority has been known to run trains right through Black neighborhoods during winter storms.

### "Fast Eddie" and the racists

Such measures have helped Washington to retain considerable popularity with Chicago's Black population and many white voters. But another factor is also important in explaining the mayor's appeal: the caliber of a political opposition that finds it difficult to restrain its racist impulses.

Since taking office, Washington has faced a bitter and persistent campaign to sabotage his initiatives by the

"Council 29," the conservative majority bloc on the city council led by 10th Ward Alderman Edward "Fast Eddie" Vrdolyak. This "Council Wars" battle has only served to solidify support for the mayor in the Black community.

It also helped the mayor for a time to deflect criticism of his lack of substantive accomplishments. However, several supporters of Washington have recently won election to the city council, including Luis Gutierrez in the hotly contested 26th Ward election. Washington can

---

**"An estimated 17.8 of Black residents of Chicago live in rat- and roach-infested homes. 16 percent have had their utilities cut off."**

---

now claim a majority on the city council, counting his own tie-breaking vote.

While the mayor's opponents in the Democratic Party have suffered setbacks, they have not given up their efforts to regain control of city government. Just as Republican candidate Bernard Epton, backed by the city's Democratic Party bosses, warned voters in 1983 to "elect him before it's too late," former Mayor Jane Byrne also hoped to don the mantle of the "Great White Hope" in the February Democratic primary, proposing as her initial campaign slogan—"Jane Byrne—the only chance."

She backed off from this slogan, however, for fear the racist tone of such an appeal would backfire among the more liberal "swing" vote in the lakefront communities. Still, one of her advisers bluntly acknowledged that Byrne "has to make the case that she is the one shot white voters have to beat Harold Washington."

During her term as mayor from 1979 to 1983, Byrne established herself as a straight-out union hater, waging such a ruthless drive to crush the city firefighters' strike in 1982 that even the *Chicago Sun-Times*—a strong opponent of the strike—felt compelled to distance itself from her union-busting tactics.

Today, Byrne attacks Washington for being weak on the issues of crime and drugs. She calls for more police, even though Chicago already has the highest proportion of police to population—4.2 per 1000 residents—of any city in the nation.

Vrdolyak, too, plays on similar themes in his race against Washington in the general election. Vrdolyak is running on the Solidarity Party ticket, an electoral front

established last year by the state Democratic Party after followers of Lyndon LaRouche captured the Democratic nominations for lieutenant governor and secretary of state.

In 1983, Vrdolyak told white Democratic precinct captains that they should oppose Washington because the campaign was "a racial thing." Four years later Vrdolyak continues to spew a steady stream of racist-tinged rhetoric on such issues as crime, welfare abuse, gang violence, single-parent households, illegitimate children, and the high-school dropout rate.

In the parlance of Vrdolyak's appeal to white voters, such issues reflect no genuine concern for human needs, but rather are calculated code words for his real message: Blacks are the problem.

Cook County Assessor Thomas Hynes and Republican Donald Haider are also challenging Washington in the general election. Hynes, who is running as an independent and is aligned with the remnants of the old Daley faction, is popular with the business community for his consistent under-taxation of downtown real estate. Haider's campaign has received scant media attention, and he is given little chance to unseat Washington.

In light of such opposition, Washington will undoubtedly win the votes of many who believe that—even if his accomplishments are few—he is a far lesser evil than the other candidates.

### Lesser evil in a high-rise hell?

The choice of a "lesser-evil" alternative, of course, is becoming a rather moot point when measured against the truly terrible and worsening conditions of daily life—especially for Blacks—in America's urban areas.

Among Black residents of the "high-rise hell" of Chicago's public-housing projects, where Washington won a 99-percent majority in the 1983 election, a recent *Chicago Tribune* poll reports that more than a third think they are worse off today than when Washington was elected, and half say that little has changed.

Chicago's minority communities actually have the highest unemployment, the worst schools, the highest crime rates, and the lowest per-capita incomes in the nation, according to a recent report on life in Chicago by the Regional Agenda Project, a panel of urban scholars.

The report adds that children are suffering the worst, with 75 percent of single-parent households experiencing hardships ranging from lack of money for food to inadequate medical care.

An estimated 17.8 percent of Black residents of Chicago live in rat- and roach-infested homes.

Twenty percent of Black people eat less than the minimum government standard for a nutritional diet.

Sixteen percent of Black Chicagoans have had their utilities turned off.

Official government figures indicate that an estimated 857,000 Chicagoans live below the poverty level. And since 1969 Chicago has lost more than one-fourth of its factories and roughly a quarter-million jobs.

### Is Chicago bouncing back?

Washington, however, claims that "we're bouncing back," and points to the creation of 100,000 neighborhood jobs since he took office. "Our stress on neighborhood development is beginning to pay off," the mayor says.

Most of these jobs are low-paid service jobs, while higher-paid industrial jobs continue to disappear. Blacks, of course, have been virtually excluded from the "upswing" of the economy after the low-point of the early 1980s recession.

In fact, as Roosevelt University urbanologist Pierre de Vise told the *Chicago Sun-Times*, "Washington's most ardent supporters have been the hardest hit during his term."

This is hardly surprising considering the modest aims of Washington's concrete proposals. His jobs program, for example, amounts to an executive order that companies that obtain "financial incentives" or contract from the city must consider hiring employees referred by City Hall.

The goal of this program? The creation of 1000 jobs in 1987 and 10,000 jobs in three years—rather microscopic figures in a city where official unemployment among Blacks today stands at a staggering 25 percent.

The city's politicians—including Washington—cry that they have no alternative but to impose more taxes or cut services since federal funds are drying up and the city's tax base is shrinking. The city is simply running out of money, they say.

Not everyone in Chicago, however, is in such dire straits. As the *Sun-Times* noted in a special series on

(continued on next page)

(continued from previous page)

the Washington administration, "The new Chicago is increasingly poor and increasingly rich, a split city shifting to a service-job base in a world market."

And the "increasingly rich" certainly have money to burn. During 1985 and 1986, a total of 148 new downtown building and renovation projects worth \$2.2 billion were completed, according to a recent report by urban affairs specialists Louis Masotti and Mary Ludgin. They note that \$4.5 billion in projects were undertaken from 1979 to 1984 and that 51 entirely new downtown buildings are in the works.

One of these projects was Presidential Towers, a \$233-million luxury-apartment complex built just west of the downtown Loop area (and just minutes east from one of the poorest slum areas in the city). It was built with \$180 million in tax-free bonds and a Congressional waiver to the requirement that 20 percent of the units be for low-income families.

Corporate skyscrapers, luxury apartments, and exclusive shopping areas are booming in the downtown area, but for the rest of Chicago things are a little more bleak. As the *Sun-Times* noted, much of Chicago remains "overrun...with 20 square miles of neighborhood wastelands on the South and West sides, where little or nothing has been done."

#### Class conflict or modest reform

The late Sydney Lens, editor of the *Progressive*, explained the dilemma Washington faces in a succinct 1985 appraisal of his administration.

"If Washington tried to launch a more expansive program," Lens explained, "one that involved higher taxes on business, a dozen business leaders would compel him to retreat. They can lower credit ratings, cut off financing, close down factories, choke off new commercial development, and persuade state and Federal officials to put the squeeze on the recalcitrant mayor."

Lens continued, "Faced with this situation, Washington has had to choose between a strategy of class conflict—a head-on clash with the First National Bank, Standard Oil, Sears, the Arthur Rubloff real-estate firm, the *Chicago Tribune*, the Council 29, and the White

Association of Commerce and Industry, agrees. "He knows we don't necessarily pitchfork babies," says Mitchell.

Washington, of course, has no fundamental disagreement with big-business on the need for fiscal austerity. It was at Washington's request that a Financial Planning Committee was organized jointly by the Civic Committee of the Commercial Club of Chicago and Chicago United.

This group of "business, civic, and community leaders" has proposed a long-range financial plan for the city that promises scaled-down city services and years of austerity. City employees can expect lower wages, longer hours, less benefits, and lost jobs as more city services are "privatized."

Washington has criticized some particulars of this austerity plan, but he has no underlying disagreement with its perspective. As the *Sun-Times* noted in its editorial endorsement of the mayor, he has "forged a solid alliance with business on concepts for long-range municipal finance."

#### Labor and Washington

Washington has also demonstrated to the business community that his office will do little to stand in the way of its efforts to defeat striking trade unions.

It took Washington 16 weeks before he ordered off-duty Chicago police officers to stop moonlighting as security guards to protect scabs during a strike by steelworkers at the Danly Machine Corp.

Chicago's public-school teachers found the mayor strangely silent while a Washington-appointed school board chairman sought to break two strikes by their union.

While Washington supported collective-bargaining agreements for city workers, he at the same time supported lobbying efforts in the state legislature to prohibit strikes by city workers.

The reality of Washington's approach to the labor movement was captured quite accurately by a participant in one of the high-level meetings aimed at preventing the closing of U.S. Steel's South Works mill. Washington's representative, it was said, "tries hard not to offend



Socialist Action/Tina Beacock

**Cabrini Projects: Chicago is still the most segregated city.**

protest slum housing, or to mobilize public support for striking unions? Obviously not.

Imagine how a really pro-labor mayor could have responded to the strike and then lock-out by printers at the *Chicago Tribune*? Washington could have appealed to the Black community to join the boycott, generated great publicity by personally walking the picket line, and banned *Tribune* reporters from City Hall press conferences and briefings.

Instead, we saw Washington's appointee as police chief, Fred Rice, personally direct the violent police attack in January 1986 on the thousands of people demonstrating in solidarity with the strikers at the newspaper's plant.

#### Misery from coast to coast

Chicago, of course, is hardly an isolated island of misery in an otherwise tranquil sea of national prosperity. Cities across the country have been ravaged by the bipartisan austerity policies of the Democratic and Republican parties.

Working people face a continuing downward slide into a cut-rate nation of skeleton social services, low-paid jobs, chronic large-scale unemployment, inadequate health care, deteriorating schools—all "defended" by the most massive military arsenal in world history.

Working people are under attack by both the Democratic and Republican parties, who represent that tiny club of the super-rich who, according to the Joint Economic Committee of the U.S. Congress, comprise one-half percent of the population and control 35.1 percent of the nation's wealth.

The economic and social policies that guide both major parties are rooted in the idea that what's good for business is good for the nation. Daily life for millions of Blacks and working people, however, reveals the utter falsehood of that notion. Private profit and human needs simply don't mix.

Blacks and working people need their own political party, one that won't pay reverent hosannas to private profit, but will rely on mass social protest—demonstrations, strikes, and electoral activity to mount an all-sided challenge to the bipartisan policies that are destroying lives and causing untold social misery.

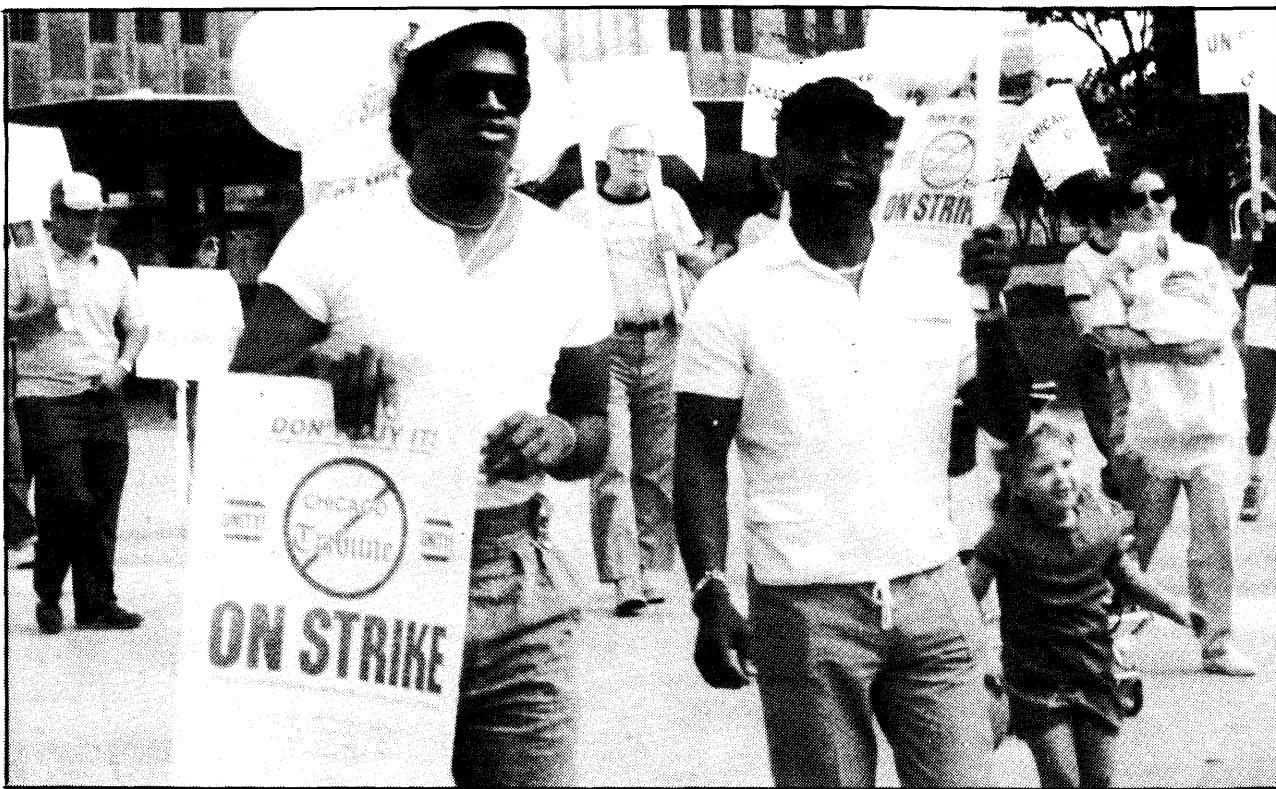
A striking contradiction stands out when the level of activity and social protest in Chicago is measured not only against the desperate conditions that ravage the Black community, but against the electrifying mood that swept Washington into office.

At best, since Washington's election, there have been only sporadic protests in the Black community, involving small groups of activists, led by Operation PUSH or people such as Alderwoman Dorothy Tillman.

Imagine if the kind of political energy that swept Washington into office were channeled into organizing a new mass social movement for Black rights—like the Civil Rights movement that destroyed Jim Crow segregation—instead of siphoning that desire for action against the racist status quo into the singular goal of capturing City Hall.

And yet what has control of City Hall by a Black Democrat led to? Little more than a few patchwork reforms to an endemic social crisis that requires far more systematic solutions. And it could not be otherwise.

The Democratic Party is a political graveyard for Blacks and working people. The task is to breathe new life into the struggle for social justice and equality by relying not on Democratic Party "saviors," but on building mass social movements that draw their strength from millions of working people, Blacks, unionists, and every victim of this system.



Socialist Action/Tina Beacock

**"Has the mayor used his office to mobilize support for the striking Chicago Tribune strikers? Obviously not. Instead, his appointee as police chief directed an attack on the strikers."**

House—and a strategy that mutes class conflict in favor of modest reform. He has taken the latter route...."

The route of "modest reform" demands that Mayor Washington continue to dutifully service the interest on the city's debt, a \$230-million annual payment from the city's treasury to private bankers—while blighted conditions ravage much of the city for "lack of funds."

Washington did attempt to impose a \$79-million commercial-lease tax on downtown business, which would have levied a much higher city tax on downtown rents. While this proposal was hardly a threat to "free enterprise" in Chicago, it was blocked by the courts. Washington then turned toward a property-tax increase and additional fees that have raised an additional \$312 million for the city's budget—again out of the pockets of the city's working population.

It is true that Washington did face some initial antagonism from Chicago's business community. But "Chicago's mayor is scoring surprising points," as the *Sun-Times* notes, "with once-a-loof downtown businessmen." Samuel R. Mitchell, president of the Chicago

management for fear he will lose business support in the next election."

One argument often raised by some supporters of Washington is that his brand of politics could spark, as Abdul Alkalimat recently stated in the *The Black Scholar*, "a new national political movement independent of the Democratic Party." At the very least, some would say, his "progressive" administration has created a more favorable climate for organizing social protest movements around a range of issues.

Washington, of course, has made it clear that he has no intention of breaking with the Democratic Party. "I'm the only one who is the dyed-in-the-wool Democrat, head to toe, hip to hip," he told the *Sun-Times* in reference to his electoral opponents.

Can it really be said that Washington's election has served as a powerful impetus to independent mobilization by Blacks and working people? Has the mayor used his office, with all its resources, to encourage mass protest against budget cuts, marches for jobs, rent strikes to

# Cincinnati NOW sponsors March for Women's Lives

By KATE CURRY

CINCINNATI—The National Organization for Women (NOW) is calling a March for Women's Lives to keep abortion safe and legal. The march will be held here on March 16.

Bill Baird, 20-year veteran of the battle for reproductive freedom, will address the rally at Fountain Square. Sally Bingham, writer and founder of the Kentucky Foundation for Women, will also be a featured speaker.

Religious fanatics have chosen Cincinnati as a focus for some of their most vicious attacks on women's rights. No arrests or indictments have ever resulted from the dual clinic firebombings here in December 1985.

Driven into crowded temporary headquarters, Planned Parenthood's patients and staff face a mob of bigots each Saturday who are bent on forcing their views on others. NOW raised over \$35,000 to help replace the burned facility through "Pledge-a-Picket." Harassers were irked to learn that their continued presence meant more money for the abortion clinic.

Eleanor Smeal, national NOW president, addressed over 500 pro-choice supporters here last August. Sherri O'Dell, national NOW vice president, is scheduled to address the May 16 march.

Bill Baird celebrated the anniversary of

Roe vs. Wade at a Jan. 22 event sponsored by National Abortion Rights Action League (NARAL). Baird also joined a picket line to expose a "phony" clinic which poses as a medical facility but is actually a front for anti-choice scare counselors.

Baird's enthusiasm and dedication inspired those who want to organize an authoritative demonstration of the majority pro-choice

sentiment. He is no stranger to the terrorist tactics of the enemies of reproductive freedom. His clinic was once bombed with him in it.

Using violence and threats, the anti-choice forces try to intimidate reasonable people into silence. If they are successful, terrified women with unwanted pregnancies will again be driven to desperate acts.

The Reagan administration is committed

to rolling back abortion rights won by the women's movement. It would like to bar federal funds for any group that even informs women that they have a right to an abortion.

Rolling back rights

At a time of high unemployment, it is very convenient for big-business and the government to drive women back into the isolation of their homes. There, the responsibility for social services, which are being cut, falls to millions of individual women.

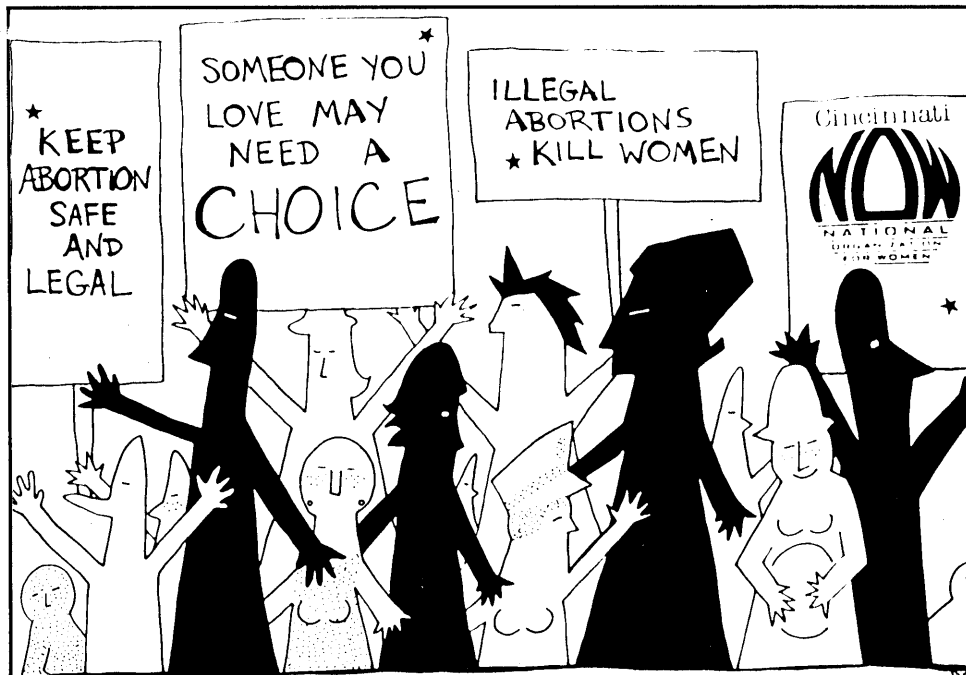
When needed again to boost the ranks of hired labor, women can be pulled out again for temporary service.

When the basic right to choose whether or not to bear children is removed, all other choices are also challenged. Women have a right to full reproductive freedom. We have a right to work decent paying jobs. Our children have a right to be wanted and to be cared for in a safe and creative environment.

We hope to meet the challenge to our reproductive rights with a bold response. Join us on May 16 in our March for Women's Lives.

For an endorsement fee of \$5.00, your name or the name of your organization will be included in the printed program to be distributed at the rally. Please send contributions and messages of support to NOW, P.O. Box 14966, Cincinnati, OH 45214. For more information call (513) 251-7722 or 731-7520.

LAST MINUTE: A pipe bomb, which failed to go off because of a faulty fuse, was placed at the Cincinnati Planned Parenthood building on Feb. 23. The bomb could have created great damage as the building was occupied. One group of "Right to Lifers"—the Jericho project—called the anonymous bomber a "hero."



Courtesy of Seyring-Boyle, Cinn. NOW

By WILLIAM LESSER

Pre-dawn raids in the Los Angeles area resulted in the arrest of eight Palestinian activists and a Kenyan woman several weeks ago. They were held on charges stemming directly from legislation passed during the witch-hunt era of the 1950s. The case has become a rallying point in defense of civil liberties.

On Jan. 26, agents of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) roused most of the defendants from bed, shackled, and arrested them. According to attorney Brian Hudson, they were kept in isolation for days and denied access to sanitary facilities and medical aid.

On Feb. 17, after nationwide defense efforts, the detainees were ordered released from jail—some on bond and others on their own recognizance. The judge noted that the government has produced no evidence of criminal activity against them.

But they still face deportation. Six of the defendants are charged under provisions of the 1952 McCarran-Walter Act that prohibit the "dissemination of communist literature."

The INS and the FBI have attempted to link the defendants with the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, an organization that allegedly "advocates or teaches economic, international, and governmental doctrines of world communism."

The only "evidence" that the government has come up with are several pro-Palestinian newspapers said to be in the possession of the defendants. In arguing against bail, the attorney for the INS, Melainie Fitzsimmons, maintained that further evidence could only be revealed to the judge in secret because of its "sensitive nature."

The arrests of the Los Angeles activists must be placed within the context of 15

## Witch-hunt era legislation targets Palestinian activists

years of stepped-up harassment of Arabs and Arab-Americans living in this country—starting with the FBI's "Operation Boulder" surveillance program of 1972.

Another wave of "investigations" occurred in 1980, when FBI and CIA agents visited employers, neighbors, and families of Arab-Americans, alleging that many of the people under surveillance had "terrorist connections."

Last year, the INS drew up a "contingency plan" to round up thousands of immigrants of Arab descent and deport them. A detention camp under construction in Louisiana will "house up to 5000 aliens," the document states.

The INS plan includes provisions to circumvent due-process protections within existing immigration law. It would allow holding Arab detainees without bond under cover of "national security."

All immigrants are targeted

The government wants to create a hysteria against "terrorists" and "communists" in order to silence those who disagree with its support to the Zionist state of Israel. It is trying desperately to divert attention from the Iran/contra scandal and other foreign-policy failures.

At the same time, the Los Angeles frame-up detentions should be viewed in light of the economic "restructuring" campaign waged by the government and the capitalist class. They hope to wear down the resistance of the American working class to cutbacks and takeaways by

targeting its most vulnerable members—recent immigrants to this country.

According to James Zogby of the Arab American Institute, this case is aimed at establishing legal precedents that will infringe on the rights of all immigrants—as well as U.S. citizens. "Because of anti-Arab racism, Palestinians are the weak link in the civil-rights chain," Zogby said.

The Committee for Justice, a coalition of church and civil-liberties groups, is

building support activities for the Los Angeles defendants. Vigils and picket lines have taken place around the country demanding that the charges be dropped.

Protest letters should be sent to Alan Nelson, Commissioner of the INS, 425 "I" St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20530. Contributions for the legal defense of the Palestinian activists can be sent to the Committee for Justice, 2440 Sunset, Los Angeles, CA 90026.

## Michel Warshawsky must be freed!

By MAY MAY GONG

On Feb. 16, Israeli police launched a spectacular operation against the Alternative Information Center (AIC), a private agency which provides information on the repression of Arabs and Palestinians by the Israeli Zionist state. The office of the AIC in Jerusalem was raided and ordered closed for six months by the government.

Michel Warshawsky, the center's director, and four staff members were arrested in the raid. The four staff members were released shortly after, but Warshawsky is still being held in the Moscobiya Detention Center, a center notorious for the torture of Palestinians.

Israeli police have charged the AIC with collaborating with "illegal organizations" and "terrorists"—specifically with the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP). The Israeli state considers anyone in the Palestinian national movement to be a "terrorist."

For the last three years, the AIC has held news conferences on Israeli abuses of Palestinians' rights and has issued press releases and newsletters to local and foreign journalists. It has a committee of 20 directors, consisting of lawyers, trade

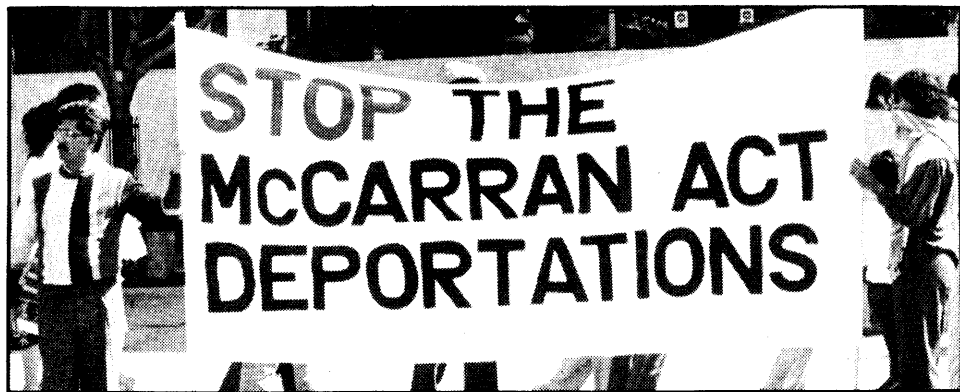
unionists, professors, social workers, and researchers.

The AIC is also well known for its printing and publishing services. These services are rendered to any organization without discrimination—except for illegal and/or racist organizations.

The Israeli police claimed that after raiding the AIC's office, they discovered newspapers that had been sent by "illegal organizations." But these same newspapers are also received by the Knesset, the Israeli parliament, and by various foreign embassies in Israel.

The closing of the AIC is yet another example of the Israeli government's continuing attacks on the Palestinian and pro-Palestinian movements. *Al-Hamish-mar*, an Israeli newspaper, has called the arrest of Michel Warshawsky and the closing of the center "a crime against democracy."

Telegrams and letters of protest demanding the immediate release of Michel Warshawsky should be sent to: Avraham Sharir, Minister of Justice, 29 Salah A-din, Jerusalem, 91010, Israel. Copies should be sent to Ambassador Meir Rosenne, Embassy of Israel, 3514 International Drive, NW, Washington, D.C. 20008.



Socialist Action/Kathleen Onan

# ...Immigration law attacks rights

(continued from page 1)

support. Peter Rodino is a Democratic Representative from New Jersey. Alan Simpson is a Republican Senator from Wyoming.

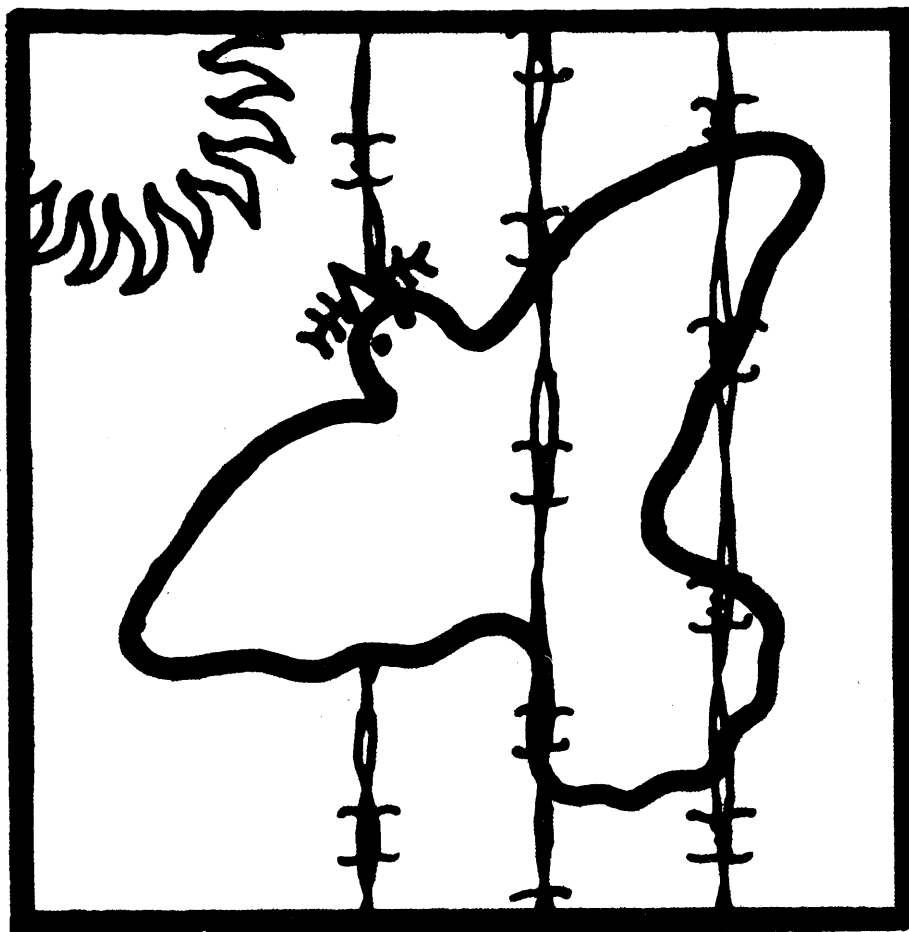
Various Congressional Democrats forged a compromise "guestworker" package considered essential to the bill's passage. It guarantees the growers a contrived steady flow of easily exploited and cheap labor, especially from Mexico. President Reagan gladly signed it, of course.

No one involved with the fight for immigrant rights seems to disagree with Marcia Gallo when she says that the new law "will not slow down immigration. It will only make it tougher on those who do come."

Undocumented workers will now have to take even worse jobs and live an even more underground existence. (The new law provides for increased funding for the INS and the U.S. Border Patrol.) As long as immigrants face extreme poverty and political repression in their homelands, they will be forced to come here, documented or not.

The law, itself, admits the possibility that its provisions may spur job discrimination. So it establishes an elaborate but vague series of "sunset" provisions to supposedly guard against discrimination in hiring. It then calls on that well-known champion of civil rights, the Government Accounting Office, to act as the guardian of these provisions.

The law explicitly bars discrimination based on citizenship status or national origin, according to the MALDEF summary, but then goes on to allow an employer to hire a citizen over a lawful



permanent resident.

Where does that leave the temporary resident or the refugee—not to speak of the undocumented worker, who only gets hired if he or she will work for less?

#### Fraudulent amnesty provision

Amnesty for immigrants without documentation is supposed to be the humane face of the new law—"Give me your homeless and downtrodden."

The government has mounted a gigantic publicity campaign announcing that undocumented immigrant workers who have lived in the country continuously since before Jan. 1, 1982, can apply for temporary resident papers—which will supposedly lead to citizenship.

A closer look at what's really offered reveals the fraudulent character of this provision. Marcia Gallo calls it a lot of "hype around amnesty" which only "raises false expectations."

First, no one who arrived after Jan. 1, 1982, is eligible for amnesty. This is quite a substantial number. Gallo asks, "Why not 1985 or '86?"

Second, those who arrived before 1982 have lived underground and worked under the table—hiding everything, destroying every scrap of proof. The new law demands that they now produce rent, employment, or medical documents; the very things they have been forced to destroy.

The Asian Law Caucus estimates that 80 percent of the undocumented immigrants

have destroyed their documents. A cruel joke. Should immigrants try to qualify for amnesty and fail, they will be prime candidates for deportation. It's not surprising, then, that MALDEF advises immigrants to "look at all possible options before applying for amnesty."

Another proposed rule would bar

accepting applications yet, and the program won't start up until May 1987, at the earliest.

The new law mandates an unusual procedure in establishing administrative ground rules. Usually the administering federal agency just publishes the rules and regulations. And that's it.

The Simpson-Rodino Law requires that the rules be published in tentative form and that public response be considered in formulating the final regulations. There is no clear indication, though, just how the INS, which is the main administering agency, will take public response into account.

#### Opposition to law mounts

Before the law was signed in November, opposition to the bill was centered among organizations based in the immigrant communities and immigrant-rights activists and attorneys. But grim reality is now propelling broader forces to join the struggle.

On Feb. 5, two labor-based coalitions held a news conference in Los Angeles to announce their opposition to the proposed rules. These coalitions, according to the Feb. 6 *Los Angeles Times*, included labor, religious charities, Latino groups, and lawyers' organizations.

Steve Nutter, the Western Regional Director of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union (ILGWU), spoke to the press on behalf of the Coalition for Humane Immigration Rights/Los Angeles. He said that "the INS is attempting to turn the unions and hiring halls into an arm of the INS" by requiring them to verify employment eligibility for workers referred under union contracts.

"We're very much against that," Nutter said. "We don't think verification should fall on the shoulders of unions, who are the defenders of workers."

The other coalition at the press

## San Francisco Socialist Action Forums

• "Platoon," the Vietnam Syndrome and the Antiwar Movement Today.—Vietnam Vets Speak Out—Speakers: Bill Watkins, Santa Cruz VFW; Eduardo Cohen, Veteran Speakers Alliance; Joe Ryan, S.A. staffwriter. FRIDAY, MARCH 6, 8 PM

• "The Fight Against Racist Attacks"—Speakers: Enola Maxwell, Exec. Dir. Potrero Hill Neighb. House, returned from Forsyth, Ga; Tammy Lee, sister of young Black man found hanged in 1985; Kwame Somburu, longtime activist and S.A. staffwriter. FRIDAY, MARCH 20, 8 PM

3435 ARMY St. RM. 308, S.F. TEL. 821-0458



INS will use new immigration law to victimize American workers as well as undocumented workers who try to improve living conditions.

immigrants who do qualify for amnesty from many federally funded programs for five years.

In order to qualify for amnesty, immigrants would have to have been regularly employed and never have been a "public charge." If they could prove employment, they probably paid taxes. Not being a "public charge" means not having used any form of publicly funded social service. So what is really being proposed is a second-class status for hard-working taxpayers.

The new law also eliminates almost all political refugees because they came with some semblance of legal status, and many came after 1982.

#### Making rules as they go

Amnesty is one important area where the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) is making the rules as they go. There are not yet any clear guidelines as to what will constitute "documentation." Responsible organizations are all advising immigrants not to go to INS offices yet—and especially not to pay large sums of money to lawyers and "consultants."

Reports have already surfaced of people paying as much as \$3000 to shady lawyers and so-called advisers who guarantee them amnesty even though the rules have not yet been fully formulated. The INS isn't even

conference was the Los Angeles Labor-Community Immigration Network.

In San Francisco, cases have already been reported of union hiring halls "screening" job applicants by requiring identity papers. This practice, as Nutter points out, would turn the unions into an arm of the INS.

The labor movement in the San Francisco Bay Area is also responding to the Simpson-Rodino Law. Jean Quan, staff member of Local 87 of the Service Employees International Union, which represents many of the city's janitors and other building service workers, reports that an AFL-CIO conference on the new immigration law is scheduled for March 14.

Self-education is a central concern of the conference, according to Quan. She also indicated that the conference will be working toward formulating "a united labor movement response," although she thinks this may be difficult since the INS seems to be "doing it as it goes along."

Legal experts from civil-liberties and immigrants-rights organizations, as well as from the AFL-CIO legal department, will be invited to speak. The unions whose members will be most directly affected—like the Service Employees locals, the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, and Local 2 of the Hotel and Restaurant Workers Union—will be asked to play a prominent role. ■



## SPECIAL ISSUE ON WOMEN

In celebration of international women's day, IV will be producing a special issue on March 9.

This issue will include articles on women's struggles and their fight for liberation in South Africa, Japan, China, the Philippines, Nicaragua, Eastern Europe and France.

International Viewpoint is a biweekly magazine published by the Fourth International. We offer a trial subscription of three issues for \$3. A six-month subscription is \$22. One year is available for \$42. Write to: 3435 Army St., Rm. 308, S.F. CA 94110.

# USX steelworkers vote 'yes' on contract offer

By MARIE WEIGAND

By a vote of 19,621 to 4,045, the steelworkers who had been locked out since Aug. 1 by USX, the nation's largest steel company, voted to accept a new four-year contract.

On Feb. 4, just three days after workers began returning to the job, USX Corporation Chairman David M. Roderick announced the indefinite idling of four mills, throwing 3,700 steelworkers out of work.

Wall Street analyst Charles Bradford joyfully proclaimed that these plant closings, coupled with the 1,374 jobs eliminated in the contract, "clearly shows the union got destroyed in the strike."

In announcing the settlement, USWA International President Lynn Williams proudly asserted, "This was a major victory, and the credit for the victory goes to our members."

Fortunately for the workers at USX, although Williams' declaration of an unprecedented victory rings hollow, Bradford's report of the union's demise is greatly exaggerated.

Instead, most USX steelworkers agree with the USWA contract summary, which states: "Because of your unity, sacrifices and unswerving support of your negotiating committee, we have emerged stronger, more dedicated and better equipped to face a challenging future."

These steelworkers recognize that it was their determination on the picketline, coupled with the active solidarity of other working people, which forced USX to back down from its most onerous demands. Yet, they also recognize that this contract, despite the earlier promises of top USWA officials, contains serious wage and benefit concessions.

## Contracting-out improvement

The most significant gain of the new contract is greatly improved language on contracting out (use of non-steelworkers to perform bargaining unit work).

Not only had USX blatantly violated the contracting-out language of the previous contract, it had also demanded that any new labor agreement codify the company's right to contract out all previously contracted-out work—even those jobs which an arbitrator



Steelworkers in Lorain, Ohio are confronted by police while trying to keep USX from shipping steel during lockout.

ruled had been done in violation of the contract.

Throughout negotiations, the company insisted it would never consider adopting the language agreed to by LTV and Bethlehem that "work capable of being performed by bargaining-unit employees shall be performed by such employees." A Dec. 2 USX letter mailed to all locked-out steelworkers cynically stated the company had offered to accept 85 percent of the union's contracting-out language.

Although improved contracting-out language brought hundreds of steelworkers back to work at LTV and Bethlehem, outside contractors remain a problem. USX steelworkers are well aware that it will be up to them to force the company to live up to its new commitment.

Roderick provided a hint of the battle ahead when he described the union's estimate, based on an internal company memo, that 2,000 to 4,000 steelworkers would be brought back to work under this contract provision as "greatly exaggerated."

## Job eliminations

The 1,374 jobs to be eliminated are less than the company's original demand. The union achieved a commitment that two special early retirements will be given for each job eliminated, thus assuring the recall of several hundred laid-off steelworkers.

However, many of those eligible for such early retirements must have second thoughts about taking advantage of this offer as they observe what's happening to LTV retirees. There, the company deliberately failed to make the contractually required pension contributions.

After filing bankruptcy (Chapter 11), LTV convinced the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation to take over its pension plans—thus depriving those who had accepted special early-retirement offers, similar to the one described above, of their negotiated monthly supplements.

This contract declares a number of facilities which have been idled for some time to be permanent shutdowns. This will make approximately 4,000 steelworkers eligible for shutdown benefits. (The company has avoided paying these benefits in the past by refusing to admit that these facilities were permanently shut down.)

## Steel-plant modernization

Like previous concessionary contracts, this one includes a company commitment to invest in steel-plant modernization. It promises a \$1-billion capital investment program for modernization in the Mon Valley and Fairfield Works.

Steelworkers who remember the way previous contract savings were used to purchase Marathon Oil, rather than invest in steel-plant modernization, will

undoubtedly wait to see the results before putting too much trust in these promises.

The company was unsuccessful in winning the right to reopen the contract whenever a competitor filed bankruptcy or discontinued its pension plan.

USWA officials pointed out that such a provision would allow the company to bring people back to work long enough to replenish its stockpiles; then immediately lock them out again, demanding further cuts based on LTV's termination of its pension plan.

## Serious concessions granted

When the lockout began, USWA negotiators stated that USX, because of its profitability, was not a candidate for wage and benefit concessions. Yet, although the final agreement does not contain the extensive wage and benefit cuts initially demanded, it does include serious concessions.

These wage and benefit cuts, estimated to average \$1.96 per hour, are closely modeled on the Bethlehem Steel pact. Wage rates are reduced by 8.09 percent (or an average of \$1.12 per hour).

Other cuts include suspending C.O.L.A. (cost of living adjustments), reducing Sunday premium and vacation pay, and eliminating three paid holidays. All those entitled to three or more weeks vacation lose one week during the first year of the agreement. During the first two years, an additional holiday is eliminated and shift premiums are reduced.

At least \$.40 per hour of these cuts will be returned in annual lump-sum "profit sharing" payments. Of course such "payments" aren't considered in calculating vacation or overtime pay.

Despite these serious concessions, most USX steelworkers felt the contract contained sufficient improvements over the company's original demands to justify the overwhelming ratification vote.

## Why a better contract wasn't won

Several factors explain why a better contract wasn't won. When steel industry officials announced the end of coordinated bargaining in basic steel, the USWA responded that this didn't prevent the union from continuing to coordinate its bargaining.

Unfortunately, this approach was short-lived. Operating on the mistaken premise that what's good for the company is good for its workers, the USWA commissioned economists to examine the financial condition of each of the major steel companies. The USWA then offered concessions to "needy" steel companies—putting profitable USX, with its continued flow of oil income, in a better



Steelworkers Press Service

position to demand the same.

This strategy also prevented a nationwide steel strike. The U.S. economy hardly noticed the absence of USX as its 17 percent market share was easily assumed by the other major steel companies which had been operating well below capacity for some time.

Thus, one of the major pressures demanding an early end to the lockout was removed. Since this contract provides for a different expiration date than the agreements reached with the other basic steel companies, this mistaken "one at a time" approach is almost certain to be repeated.

The USWA legal staff succeeded in getting almost all affected state governments to agree the work stoppage was a lockout, making the steelworkers eligible for unemployment compensation.

Approximately \$35 million were distributed from the International's strike and defense fund. Thousands of working steelworkers, recognizing the importance of this struggle, also offered financial help. Yet, as the lockout wore on and unemployment benefits ran out, steelworkers questioned whether the continued depressed steel market would allow for a better settlement.

## Unity cuts across propaganda

USX did its best to take advantage of the fact that other major steel companies weren't shut down. A Dec. 2 letter to all employees asked, "Is it not now time to ask yourself, after four months of strike, why the International refuses to accept better wages and benefits for you than it accepted from your major competitors?"

This USX letter ended, "The biggest contribution you are making to the strike is your job. It is being donated to steelworkers at competitor plants where the International has already agreed to wages and benefits lower than our offer. Those companies are hoping the International never gives USX the cost advantage it gave them. Keeping you out on strike is the best thing that can ever happen to them."

The willingness of other steelworkers to attend rallies and help out financially cut across this company propaganda. After the lockout ended, members of USWA Local 1104 at USX's Lorain, Ohio, facility passed out a letter thanking members of USWA Local 2265 at Cleveland's LTV Strip mill for their help throughout the lockout and promising their help if it's ever needed.

Yet, despite the fine words of ACTWU President Murray Finley, who headed up the AFL-CIO support committee, that "This is not just a lockout of the steelworkers, this is a lockout of the clothing workers, the auto workers, and all workers in this country—perhaps even all decent people in this country," the potential active support of hundreds of thousands of union members was never realized.

As they returned to work, steelworkers expressed their determination to force the company to live up to the new contract language. Rather than feeling defeated, they expressed a sense of unity and determination and an awareness that it was their strong stand which forced the company to finally enter into serious negotiations. ■



Steelworker being beaten by cops USX steel.



# The united front in action: Anti-Vietnam War movement gives vital lessons for today



Flax Hermes



Socialist Action/Joey Ryan

By NAT WEINSTEIN

One of the key political tasks facing the movement against U.S. intervention in Central America is to mobilize the largest possible opposition in the streets.

The anti-intervention movement is a force which restrains—and can ultimately stop—the U.S. war against the people of Central America. It is the only force, outside of Nicaragua itself, that can make the cost of direct military intervention greater than any gains to U.S. imperialism.

Our job is made easier because recent history is still a vivid memory in the minds of millions. The bitter Vietnam War experience has taught the U.S. ruling class grudging respect for the power of determined resistance by an oppressed nation to imperialist aggression. The Sandinistas' arming of their people to defend their revolution signifies to the American capitalists that a high price will be paid in blood for an attempted crushing of Nicaragua.

U.S. rulers also painfully learned a parallel lesson from the Vietnam experience. They learned to respect the power of *independent mass action* by the American people, which forced the U.S. government to withdraw from Vietnam.

The lessons of this period need to be absorbed, as well, by working people. Unfortunately, however, many of the leaders of today's anti-intervention movement have failed to draw the correct lessons of the Vietnam antiwar movement.

For example, almost all of the antiwar, anti-nuclear, and solidarity groups decided to support Walter Mondale and other Democratic Party candidates in the 1984 elections. This was done instead of building mass demonstrations to answer the U.S. invasion of Grenada and the increased war moves against Nicaragua and El Salvador. The movement became totally demobilized during election time.

Today, many of the organizations building the April 25 demonstrations in Washington, D.C., and San Francisco state publicly that they view these actions as an opportunity to "set a broader agenda for the 1988 election campaign." For these groups, April 25 is little more than a springboard to elect a Democratic Party president in the 1988 elections.

*The Guardian* newspaper, for example, in an editorial dated Feb. 4 states the following:

"Regardless of how well we mobilize in the immediate period...the struggle over



"Bring the Boys Home" slogan eventually had an effect on American soldiers in Vietnam. For them, "Out Now!" meant surviving.

Reagan's policies and the possibility of the left seriously influencing public opinion will be with us for some time to come....In the longer run, helping build the Rainbow Coalition for the 1988 election is a project that offers progressives a chance to keep alive demands for a radical reform of U.S. foreign policy and criticism of the mainstream Democratic Party's continuing commitment to the Cold War."

*The Guardian* fails to tell its readers, however, that the Rainbow Coalition delivered its supporters to Walter Mondale in 1984—despite the fact that Mondale said he would have invaded Grenada and would quarantine Nicaragua.

Today, Jesse Jackson and the Rainbow Coalition have renewed their pledge to remain a "loyal opposition" inside the Democratic Party.

To avoid the pitfalls of the past—and to

maintain an increasingly visible independent mass antiwar movement—it is therefore necessary to understand the theoretical underpinning of the correct strategy that so effectively tied the hands of the U.S. warmakers in Vietnam.

#### Antiwar strategy in the 1960s

The most important lesson of the Vietnam experience comes through understanding how the tactic of the workers' united front was applied to mobilize millions of Americans against the Vietnam War. [See box on the principles of the united front.]

This tactic serves as a guide to action in the current struggle against American counterrevolutionary intervention in Central America and against the deepening assault on American workers' living standards.

In the beginning, the Vietnam antiwar

movement had no mass organizational base. The principal mass organizations of the American workers, the trade unions, were absent from this movement.

The unions have been dominated for at least the last 40 years by a conservative labor bureaucracy which has been as servile toward its capitalist "partners" as any in history. The large majority of the labor officials were shameless supporters of the imperialist invasion of Vietnam.

Despite this massive obstacle, the opposition to the Vietnam War grew quickly along with the casualty statistics and the accounts of burned villages and other atrocities.

But the successful unleashing and focusing of this potential force was difficult. The early antiwar movement was made up by small socialist and pacifist groups and by a few somewhat prominent individuals. It had to be built from scratch.

#### "Negotiations" vs. "Out Now!"

In addition to its small size and narrow base, the antiwar movement was divided from the outset over strategy. This division was most typically expressed in the opposed slogans: "Negotiate Now!" vs. "U.S. Troops Out Now!"

The "negotiations" position was inherently and fatally flawed. It implicitly accepted the "right" of the American capitalist government to limit the right of the Vietnamese people to determine and regulate their own affairs. It had the practical effect of helping to provide—intentionally or not—a screen behind which U.S. imperialism could compel the Vietnamese to give up at least some of their rights.

The right to negotiate, of course, is certainly a right of the victims—just as hold-up victims may be compelled to "negotiate" away their money for their life. But the witnesses to the crime do not have the right to demand, directly or indirectly, that the victim "negotiate" with the robber over terms for ending the robbery. They are obligated *only* to apply whatever material and moral force they can bring to bear against the robber, and the robber alone.

Starting from the principle upon which our own nation's independence from Britain was won—the right of nations to self-determination—there can be no question as to who was robbing whom in Vietnam.

But the "negotiate" slogan dodges this question, holding both sides at least

(continued on page 10)

# ... Anti-Vietnam War



(continued from page 9)

partially at fault. It is an inherent adaptation to capitalist politicians—so-called "peace candidates"—who hide their pro-war voting record in Congress behind advocacy of "a negotiated end to the war."

The reformist advocates of "peace" candidates within the anti-intervention movement, hard put to justify support to such cynical politicians, palmed it off, more than once, as a "referendum against war."

## "Peace" candidates

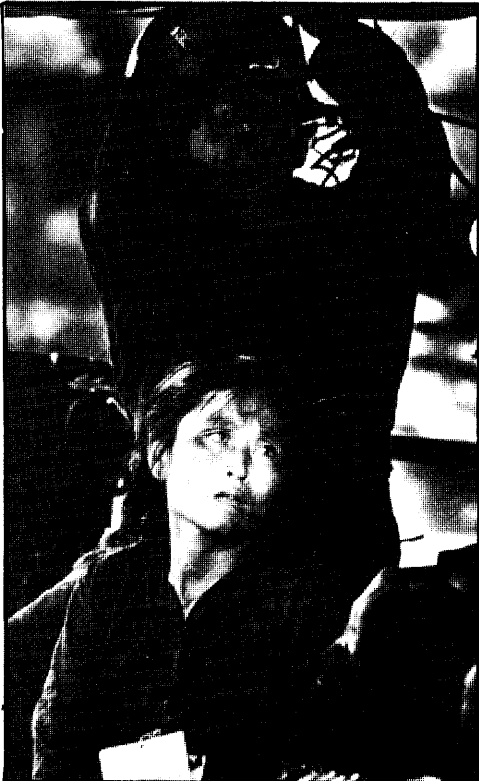
In the first place, a vote for a capitalist politician has nothing in common with a referendum in which the issue is more or less clearly posed: for or against the war. A vote for an alleged peace candidate is almost always a grotesque parody of such a referendum.

President Lyndon B. Johnson was such a "peace" candidate in the 1964 election. Johnson, right smack in the middle of his election campaign, issued the "Tonkin Gulf" declaration, which served as the pretext for a major escalation of the war in Vietnam. Sections of the antiwar movement—incredible as this may seem today—altered their slogan from "All the way with LBJ!" to "Part of the way with LBJ!"

A second consequence of the spurious "referendum on war" concept is that it entails registering support for the "peace" candidate's other reactionary political stands—always a part of the package.

Such a vote is worthless as a means of registering opposition to the war. But the vote of confidence it gives to these thinly disguised pro-war capitalist politicians lulls the masses, dissipating effective opposition to the war. The elected "peace" candidate becomes the best instrument for carrying out imperialist war policy.

"Peace" candidate President Johnson's



Phillip Griffith-Jones

electoral victory in 1964 over "war" candidate Barry Goldwater is a text-book case. Goldwater couldn't have been as effective in taking the country deeper into the Vietnam bloodbath as was Johnson, who did his dirty work under cover of his 1964 election pledge that "American youth would not be sent to die on Asian battlefields."

When chickens elect foxes to guard the chicken coop against wolves—to paraphrase the militant Black leader Malcolm X—the chickens are in deep trouble.

Even the best-intentioned person can get sucked into the logic of this policy. Truth gives way to rationalizations to justify this false policy. And when truth is abandoned, confusion and demoralization set in.

In contrast to the "negotiate" slogan, the demand for immediate withdrawal of U.S. troops from Vietnam ("Out Now!") was educational, clear, and to the point. It raised consciousness by focusing entirely and exclusively on the U.S. government and its criminal war against the Vietnamese people.

## Impact of "Out Now!" on GIs

The power of the "Out Now!" slogan to maximize the force of the potential opposition to imperialist intervention goes even deeper.

This slogan, especially in its more popular form, "Bring Our Boys Home Now!," is intimately connected with the deepest-felt interests of the great majority of the American people who don't want their sons to be killed—especially for no good reason!

It strikes a still deeper chord. The vision of millions of Americans marching in the streets demanding that their sons be brought home put the movement squarely behind American youth in uniform and inspired and fostered an oppositional movement by GIs themselves.

It started with GIs symbolically putting flowers in the muzzles of their rifles. Later, GIs began to take part in the demonstrations in U.S. cities. Opposition soon was expressed in increasing refusals by GIs to obey orders to carry out what they saw as suicidal patrols in pursuit of goals they no longer supported.

Knowing that they had the support of millions marching in the streets, the mood in the ranks of the imperialist army rapidly evolved toward organized open opposition to the war. The specter of future demonstrations by GIs in Vietnam itself, more than anything else, drove home the mortal danger of continued imperialist war to U.S. capitalism.

All of these forms of opposition, first made visible by hundreds of thousands of Americans marching in the streets, were linked together by the strategic slogan of "Out Now!"

## The ultra-left strategy

Also harmful to an effective opposition to the U.S. invasion of Vietnam was the strategy of misguided leftists inherent in

their slogan "Victory to the Vietnamese Revolution!"

Had this slogan been adopted by the movement as a whole, it would have reduced the potential size of active opposition to the war from millions to thousands. Only those already convinced supporters of the Vietnamese Revolution—a tiny fraction of the potential antiwar movement—would have responded to such a call to action.

This would have short-circuited and blocked the course of development which passed through a stage of ever-increasing numbers of marchers to a stage that included active opposition to the war among the troops themselves.

The mistake is not an uncommon one. It derives from short-sightedness and impatience. It is the result of failing to accurately gauge the existing level of mass consciousness—a pre-requisite for advancing slogans that make sense to masses of people and are designed to lead them, in action, to higher levels of consciousness.

## Single issue vs. multi-issue

Should the political basis for joint action be the single issue of opposition to the war? Or should it include a commitment to support a range of issues as a condition for participation?

A dispute seemed to arise over this question, too. But, at bottom, it flowed from the basic argument over whether the antiwar coalition should be independent of the political parties of the warmakers or whether it should take an electoral

form—that is, voting for capitalist "peace" candidates.

Given the lack of any working-class political organization in the United States—even of a conservative Labor Party such as exists in England—any electoral expression of opposition to the war would have inevitably found its way into support to the Democratic Party wing of the capitalist political establishment.

In any case, a serious proposal for a united front must of necessity be limited to a narrow range of urgent demands. For the united front to include, at the outset, all the political questions which divide the movement—something that is implicit in an electoral campaign—is a contradiction in terms.

## Unity in action

Such a limited agreement for joint action does not, of course, require that the participating groups give up their position on any question. Also retained by all is the right to criticize each other—including the right to march separately, under their own banners, and to carry their own slogans.

This united-front principle allowed advocates of "Negotiate Now!" "Out Now!" and "Victory to the NLF" to march together against the U.S. war in Vietnam. Meanwhile the argument continued, events shed light on opposed positions, and minds were changed. "Out Now!" eventually came to be the dominant position in the antiwar movement. The rest is history.

Under this principle, a united front-type antiwar coalition was formed. (This was

# Tactics of a workers' 'March separately, s

Working people and their families are an absolute majority of society. The capitalists are a tiny minority. If workers were united in struggle for their class interests, they could easily overcome capitalist power and come to rule society. But in every country the working class tends to be divided into a plurality of parties, unions, factions, and tendencies.

This is an expression, in the last analysis, of the historic division between advocates of reform and revolution. The reformists and labor bureaucrats, committed to a strategy based on a "partnership" with the capitalist class, are the main obstacle to united, working-class action.

Historically, the revolutionary workers' movement has consistently advanced the proposal for a united front to overcome this division when circumstances cry out for it. The united-front tactic is embodied in the principle: "March separately, but strike together."

The basis of such an agreement to carry out joint action must realistically be limited to one or at most a few compelling issues. A united front cannot encompass the range of issues contained in conflicting programs.

The proposal for joint action is a practical way to advance immediate pressing needs without solving in advance all of the programmatic questions in dispute.

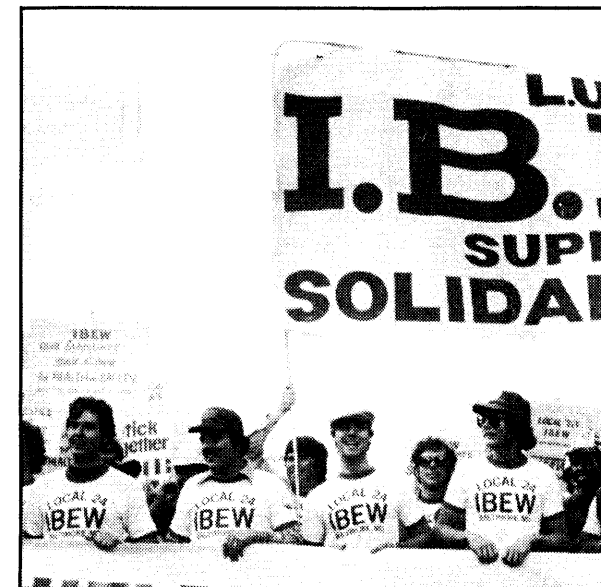
The appeal to the reformist leaders to take joint action in defense of working-class interests, thus, tends to gain a favorable response from those they influence. The reformists are put under great pressure to join in a united front to defend class interests. If they refuse, they risk losing influence over their members.

This is the logic upon which the united-front tactic is based.

## Examples of the united front

The need for working-class unity during a strike, for example, opens the door to united action despite deep-going differences over many important questions. In fact, the most rudimentary form of the united front is the trade union.

In the trade union, workers of all



Solidarity Day, Sept. 19, 1981: 700,000 tra Washington, D.C. to protest against Reaga

kind—Blacks, whites, men, women, socialists, Democrats, Republicans, Christians, Moslems, or Jews—are eligible for membership. The single purpose of the trade union is to unite workers in defense of their class interests against the bosses—despite the ideological and political differences which may exist.

The only condition for membership in a trade union is acceptance of majority decisions where the vital interests of the workers are at stake. The only limit to the breadth of decisions the majority imposes on the minority should be at the point where this might destroy an effective united front against the employer.

Another form of the united front was demonstrated on Sept. 19, 1981—"Solidarity Day"—when the AFL-CIO, the United Auto Workers union, the Teamsters union, and the United Mine Workers of America put their differences aside and mobilized 700,000 workers in the streets of Washington, D.C., against the Reagan administration's anti-labor policies.

But the application of the united-front

not a real workers' united front given that the main workers' organizations—the unions—were not involved.)

The mass-action antiwar coalition encouraged progressive, issue-oriented groups to participate in the marches as self-organized contingents. Labor, Black, Latino, women's, gay and lesbian, church and other groups, organized and built their own contingents and carried their own banners and slogans in the marches. All these points of view were further represented by appropriate spokespersons on the platform at the jointly sponsored rallies.

It is important to note, however, that support to these issues was not made a condition for participation in the united action. The only condition was opposition to the war.

**Democracy in antiwar coalition**

Another dispute within the movement against the Vietnam War was over the coalition's organizational structure. Some of the political currents favored a structure composed of one representative from each organization to constitute a leadership body that would be empowered to make policy.

There were basically two problems with this structural form.

First, one delegate per organization meant that the larger and more influential organizations would have the same voting weight as an "organization" with half a dozen members. (Experience showed, too, that where this method was put into effect, some political groups had an inordinate

number of its supporters claiming to represent different "organizations.")

Second, in sharp contrast to the traditional united front of mass workers' organizations, all the groups together could not bring out more than a small fraction of the action's organizers and participants.

The delegated structure provided for virtually no representation for the main force of foot-soldiers, among which students were the most numerous. It was they who printed the leaflets, distributed them, made the banners and posters, and otherwise did the nitty-gritty work of building the antiwar actions.

Given this real situation—particularly the absence of the unions from the movement—the best and most democratic organizational structure was based simply on the rule of one person, one vote. This structure was designed to let the people who were crucial for carrying out a successful action make the decisions. This policy facilitated the greatest possible activism directed toward building the largest possible demonstrations.

Most important, it provided the force for keeping the antiwar coalition pointed in the right political direction.

**The key role of students**

Because the labor bureaucracy enjoyed virtually exclusive domination over the unions, they were able to chain the class organizations of the workers to the pro-war policy of the capitalist government. This meant that mass worker participation was not present to keep a united coalition



Veterans appeal to troops at a mass antiwar demonstration on Oct. 21, 1967 in Washington, D.C. As war continued, protests increased.

against the Vietnam War on the healthy tracks of class interests.

The force that played this vital role was the largely working-class youth, particularly the student movement. Young people, who were ordained to be among the first victims of Washington's imperialist war and slated to be drafted to kill and be killed in Vietnam, had a vital stake in building a movement that could end the war.

Students formed ad-hoc groups everywhere, and they strained for the widest participation in the antiwar struggle. They also listened with the greatest attentiveness to the debates over antiwar policy. Also most acutely interested in an effective policy were the parents and others whose loved ones stood in danger of losing life or limb.

This largely working-class opposition to the war grew exponentially as more and more youth were sent to Vietnam and shipped home in body bags.

As the depth of opposition to the war visibly grew, increasing numbers of rank-and-file trade unionists and an important sprinkling of union leaders were won over to demand the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Vietnam. It was their sons who were least able to finagle exemptions from the draft, or, when drafted, to be assigned safe posts far from the battlefields.

Through this medium—the students and others directly threatened by the war—the class interests of workers made themselves felt in the antiwar coalition decision-making process. In the long run, of course, there is no substitute for the direct involvement of the organized workers.

Workers as a social class gain nothing from imperialist wars. Only the capitalists gain. Their wars are always a profit bonanza for the exploiting class, while workers are compelled to make sacrifices.

**Guns or butter?**

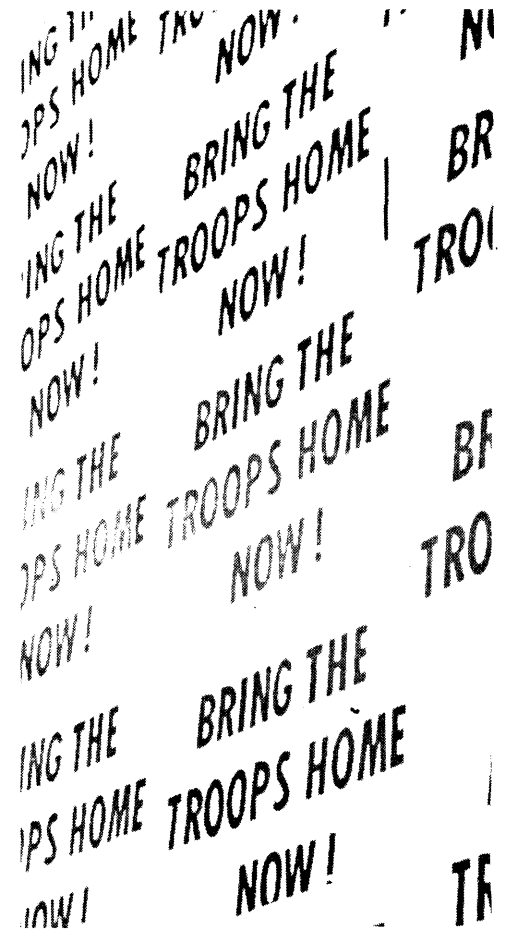
Despite capitalist promises about "building the Great Society" and "fighting a war against poverty" (both slogans cynically put out by the Johnson administration), resistance to the war steadily increased among workers at home.

Economic hardship would have accelerated this resistance. For this reason, the war strategy of American capitalism had to be based initially on a policy of "guns and butter."

Through deficit financing, full payment for the costs of the war was being temporarily postponed. Wage standards were maintained and even increased for many in the stronger unions. But this could not be maintained indefinitely. Either wages or profits would have to be diverted to pay for the enormous and steadily growing costs of the war.

The capitalist economy became seriously destabilized, taking the form of a worldwide crisis of confidence in the dollar. Forced by the monetary crisis to take measures to pay for the enormous war costs, an attack on workers' living standards and their unions was signaled in 1971 by President Nixon's decree of a "wage-price freeze."

Like all such "freezes," wages, but not



prices (for the most part), were restrained by government edict.

This move to make the workers begin paying for the war had profound potential consequences, ultimately threatening to bring the heavy battalions of the working class, despite the bureaucracy, into the struggle. Had the U.S. capitalist government not withdrawn from Vietnam, its crisis could have grown to near-revolutionary proportions.

But the development of mass consciousness was only slowed down. It didn't stop with the end of the war. It continues to evolve, under the impact of the deepening assault on workers' living standards and their unions.

**U.S. war in Central America**

The experience of the Vietnam War laid the basis for a more rapid development of an effective antiwar movement in response to the imperialist intervention against the Nicaraguan and Central American revolution.

Late in 1984, sentiment grew for a mass action to show opposition to deepening intervention in Central America by the U.S. government. The same kinds of organizations that sponsored the anti-Vietnam War movement again took initiatives leading to a national action in the spring of 1985.

But there was a big change from the Vietnam War years. The assault on workers' living standards and their unions had been under way since Nixon's 1971 wage freeze. The anti-labor offensive was accelerated almost at the same time that the revolution in Nicaragua exploded.

For the first time, with the unions under

(continued on page 12)

**Workers' united front: y, strike together'**



Socialist Action/Joey Ryan

700,000 trade unionists mobilized in inst Reagan's economic policies.

tactic varies with changes in mass consciousness.

In this country, the formation of a labor party based on the unions would represent a higher form of the united front. A labor party would unite workers who understand the need to take their economic struggles into the political arena. Advocates of reform and revolution would continue to coexist and vie for leadership in such a party.

In Europe and other countries where several mass labor or socialist parties exist, the call for the united front is a call for these parties to unite in action both in the streets and in the electoral arena against the capitalists and their representatives.

In Germany in the early 1930s, for example, revolutionaries called for the Communist Party and the Socialist Party to unite against Hitler. Their failure to unite paved the way for the advent of fascism in that country.

**Workers' councils**

The workers' council is the highest form of the united front. But this form

can be reached only in a crisis of near revolutionary proportions.

In these periods of heightened class struggle, the workers' united front tends to become a kind of executive committee of the fighting organizations of the working class.

Trade unions, strike committees, factory committees and other institutions created by the workers in such periods tend to come together into a centralized and representative united front to direct the struggle of the entire class.

Such workers' councils also may evolve, in especially tumultuous periods, toward becoming an organ in the struggle for political power, i.e., a sort of "congress" or "parliament" of the fighting working class that can evolve into a workers' government.

In Russia, "soviets" (Russian for council) developed prior to the October 1917 revolution and became the organs of the new state power.

But in less turbulent times the united front is simply a form for uniting workers for limited action in the face of a clear and present danger.

**Democracy in the united front**

Although pressure for the united front always comes from the ranks, it must begin with an agreement on top—between the leaders of competing workers' organizations. Democracy, at least initially, may be restricted within the bounds of the framework of such an agreement.

But the united front is established for the purpose of carrying out an action involving the mobilization, by each participating group, of their thousands and hundreds of thousands of members.

Practical decisions must be made on many levels in the course of preparing for and carrying out the agreed-on joint actions. This can only be done according to the principle of majority rule. Thus, the inexorable logic of the workers' united front is profoundly democratic. —NAT WEINSTEIN

their slogan "Victory to the Vietnamese Revolution!"

Had this slogan been adopted by the movement as a whole, it would have reduced the potential size of active opposition to the war from millions to thousands. Only those already convinced supporters of the Vietnamese Revolution—a tiny fraction of the potential antiwar movement—would have responded to such a call to action.

This would have short-circuited and blocked the course of development which passed through a stage of ever-increasing numbers of marchers to a stage that included active opposition to the war among the troops themselves.

The mistake is not an uncommon one. It derives from short-sightedness and impatience. It is the result of failing to accurately gauge the existing level of mass consciousness—a pre-requisite for advancing slogans that make sense to masses of people and are designed to lead them, in action, to higher levels of consciousness.

#### Single issue vs. multi-issue

Should the political basis for joint action be the single issue of opposition to the war? Or should it include a commitment to support a range of issues as a condition for participation?

A dispute seemed to arise over this question, too. But, at bottom, it flowed from the basic argument over whether the antiwar coalition should be independent of the political parties of the warmakers or whether it should take an electoral

form—that is, voting for capitalist "peace" candidates.

Given the lack of any working-class political organization in the United States—even of a conservative Labor Party such as exists in England—any electoral expression of opposition to the war would have inevitably found its way into support to the Democratic Party wing of the capitalist political establishment.

In any case, a serious proposal for a united front must of necessity be limited to a narrow range of urgent demands. For the united front to include, at the outset, all the political questions which divide the movement—something that is implicit in an electoral campaign—is a contradiction in terms.

#### Unity in action

Such a limited agreement for joint action does not, of course, require that the participating groups give up their position on any question. Also retained by all is the right to criticize each other—including the right to march separately, under their own banners, and to carry their own slogans.

This united-front principle allowed advocates of "Negotiate Now!" "Out Now!" and "Victory to the NLF" to march together against the U.S. war in Vietnam. Meanwhile the argument continued, events shed light on opposed positions, and minds were changed. "Out Now!" eventually came to be the dominant position in the antiwar movement. The rest is history.

Under this principle, a united front-type antiwar coalition was formed. (This was

not a real workers' united front given that the main workers' organizations—the unions—were not involved.)

The mass-action antiwar coalition encouraged progressive, issue-oriented groups to participate in the marches as self-organized contingents. Labor, Black, Latino, women's, gay and lesbian, church and other groups, organized and built their own contingents and carried their own banners and slogans in the marches. All these points of view were further represented by appropriate spokespersons on the platform at the jointly sponsored rallies.

It is important to note, however, that support to these issues was not made a condition for participation in the united action. The only condition was opposition to the war.

#### Democracy in antiwar coalition

Another dispute within the movement against the Vietnam War was over the coalition's organizational structure. Some of the political currents favored a structure composed of one representative from each organization to constitute a leadership body that would be empowered to make policy.

There were basically two problems with this structural form.

First, one delegate per organization meant that the larger and more influential organizations would have the same voting weight as an "organization" with half a dozen members. (Experience showed, too, that where this method was put into effect, some political groups had an inordinate

number of its supporters claiming to represent different "organizations.")

Second, in sharp contrast to the traditional united front of mass workers' organizations, all the groups together could not bring out more than a small fraction of the action's organizers and participants.

The delegated structure provided for virtually no representation for the main force of foot-soldiers, among which students were the most numerous. It was they who printed the leaflets, distributed them, made the banners and posters, and otherwise did the nitty-gritty work of building the antiwar actions.

Given this real situation—particularly the absence of the unions from the movement—the best and most democratic organizational structure was based simply on the rule of one person, one vote. This structure was designed to let the people who were crucial for carrying out a successful action make the decisions. This policy facilitated the greatest possible activism directed toward building the largest possible demonstrations.

Most important, it provided the force for keeping the antiwar coalition pointed in the right political direction.

#### The key role of students

Because the labor bureaucracy enjoyed virtually exclusive domination over the unions, they were able to chain the class organizations of the workers to the pro-war policy of the capitalist government. This meant that mass worker participation was not present to keep a united coalition

## Tactics of a workers' united front: 'March separately, strike together'

Working people and their families are an absolute majority of society. The capitalists are a tiny minority. If workers were united in struggle for their class interests, they could easily overcome capitalist power and come to rule society. But in every country the working class tends to be divided into a plurality of parties, unions, factions, and tendencies.

This is an expression, in the last analysis, of the historic division between advocates of reform and revolution. The reformists and labor bureaucrats, committed to a strategy based on a "partnership" with the capitalist class, are the main obstacle to united, working-class action.

Historically, the revolutionary workers' movement has consistently advanced the proposal for a united front to overcome this division when circumstances cry out for it. The united-front tactic is embodied in the principle: "March separately, but strike together."

The basis of such an agreement to carry out joint action must realistically be limited to one or at most a few compelling issues. A united front cannot encompass the range of issues contained in conflicting programs.

The proposal for joint action is a practical way to advance immediate pressing needs without solving in advance all of the programmatic questions in dispute.

The appeal to the reformist leaders to take joint action in defense of working-class interests, thus, tends to gain a favorable response from those they influence. The reformists are put under great pressure to join in a united front to defend class interests. If they refuse, they risk losing influence over their members.

This is the logic upon which the united-front tactic is based.

#### Examples of the united front

The need for working-class unity during a strike, for example, opens the door to united action despite deep-going differences over many important questions. In fact, the most rudimentary form of the united front is the trade union.

In the trade union, workers of all



Solidarity Day, Sept. 19, 1981: 700,000 trade unionists mobilized in Washington, D.C. to protest against Reagan's economic policies.

kind—Blacks, whites, men, women, socialists, Democrats, Republicans, Christians, Moslems, or Jews—are eligible for membership. The single purpose of the trade union is to unite workers in defense of their class interests against the bosses—despite the ideological and political differences which may exist.

The only condition for membership in a trade union is acceptance of majority decisions where the vital interests of the workers are at stake. The only limit to the breadth of decisions the majority imposes on the minority should be at the point where this might destroy an effective united front against the employer.

Another form of the united front was demonstrated on Sept. 19, 1981—"Solidarity Day"—when the AFL-CIO, the United Auto Workers union, the Teamsters union, and the United Mine Workers of America put their differences aside and mobilized 700,000 workers in the streets of Washington, D.C., against the Reagan administration's anti-labor policies.

But the application of the united-front

tactic varies with changes in mass consciousness.

In this country, the formation of a labor party based on the unions would represent a higher form of the united front. A labor party would unite workers who understand the need to take their economic struggles into the political arena. Advocates of reform and revolution would continue to coexist and vie for leadership in such a party.

In Europe and other countries where several mass labor or socialist parties exist, the call for the united front is a call for these parties to unite in action both in the streets and in the electoral arena against the capitalists and their representatives.

In Germany in the early 1930s, for example, revolutionaries called for the Communist Party and the Socialist Party to unite against Hitler. Their failure to unite paved the way for the advent of fascism in that country.

#### Workers' councils

The workers' council is the highest form of the united front. But this form

can be reached only in a crisis of near revolutionary proportions.

In these periods of heightened class struggle, the workers' united front tends to become a kind of executive committee of the fighting organizations of the working class.

Trade unions, strike committees, factory committees and other institutions created by the workers in such periods tend to come together into a centralized and representative united front to direct the struggle of the entire class.

Such workers' councils also may evolve, in especially tumultuous periods, toward becoming an organ in the struggle for political power, i.e., a sort of "congress" or "parliament" of the fighting working class that can evolve into a workers' government.

In Russia, "soviets" (Russian for council) developed prior to the October 1917 revolution and became the organs of the new state power.

But in less turbulent times the united front is simply a form for uniting workers for limited action in the face of a clear and present danger.

#### Democracy in the united front

Although pressure for the united front always comes from the ranks, it must begin with an agreement on top—between the leaders of competing workers' organizations. Democracy, at least initially, may be restricted within the bounds of the framework of such an agreement.

But the united front is established for the purpose of carrying out an action involving the mobilization, by each participating group, of their thousands and hundreds of thousands of members.

Practical decisions must be made on many levels in the course of preparing for and carrying out the agreed-on joint actions. This can only be done according to the principle of majority rule. Thus, the inexorable logic of the workers' united front is profoundly democratic. —NAT WEINSTEIN



Veteran 1967

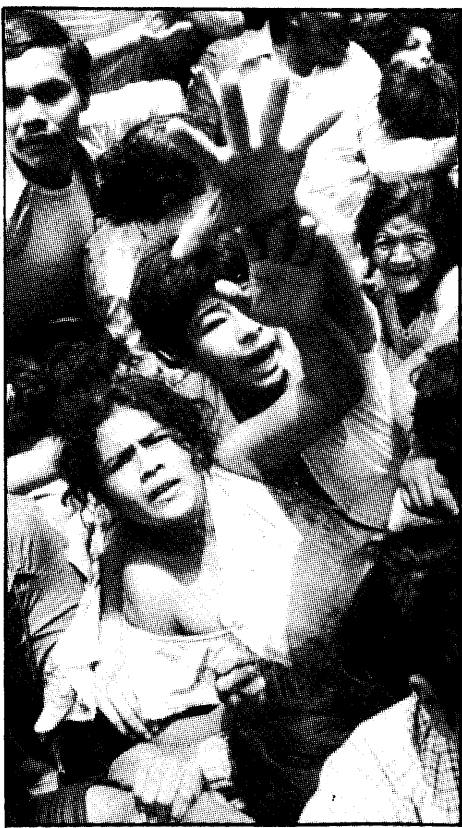
against tracks  
The the la  
particular  
people  
first v  
war ar  
killed  
buildi  
war.  
Stud  
where  
partici  
also li  
to the  
most  
policy  
loved  
limb.

This  
the wa  
more  
shippe  
As t  
visibly  
and-fil  
sprinkl  
to dem  
from V  
least a  
draft,  
posts f  
Thro  
others  
class in  
felt in  
making  
there  
involv  
Wor  
from i  
gain.  
bonanz  
worker

Des  
"buildi  
war a  
cynica  
admin  
steadil  
Eco  
acceler  
the wa  
to be  
and bu

Thro  
for th  
tempo  
were  
many  
not be  
wages  
to pay  
growin

The  
destab  
crisis  
the mc  
for the  
worke  
was si  
decre  
Like



Socialist Action/Joe Ryan



(left) Central America; the next Vietnam. Demonstrations like April 20, 1985 (above) can make the warmakers think twice.

(continued from page 11)

direct assault by the capitalists, top trade-union officials felt compelled to take their distance from their previous wholesale endorsement of the government's foreign policy.

In San Francisco, as elsewhere, there was an evolution of consciousness coming from both the Vietnam experience and the sharpening class struggle.

Officials from all six AFL-CIO Central Labor Councils in the San Francisco Bay Area joined in forming the Mobilization for Peace, Jobs and Justice, which sponsored the April 20, 1985, San Francisco protest march and rally around four themes: No U.S. Intervention in Central America; End U.S. Support for South African Apartheid; Freeze and Reverse the Nuclear Arms Race; Jobs and Justice, not War.

This presented a challenge for the antiwar movement to develop new structures, slogans, and activities aimed at involving the unions and all organizations of the oppressed sectors of society.

The commitment of the labor movement to join the antiwar movement was unprecedented. The unions provided office space, donated thousands of dollars, published articles in union newspapers, and took on other important coalition responsibilities.

It was in the interest of the antiwar movement to increase this participation and to enhance the decision-making role of the unions in the coalition.

But while this commitment by the labor movement pointed toward the possibility of a true workers' united front, the coalition had not yet—and still hasn't—become that. The labor officials were willing to become active in the antiwar coalition, but they

were unable or unwilling to bring more than a few of their members to the coalition's general meetings.

The lack of direct rank-and-file involvement, moreover, is a reflection of the fact that workers remain on the defensive as a result of the class-collaborationist policies of the union bureaucrats. The labor movement, which developed into a powerful force in the great battles of the 1930s and '40s, was gradually demobilized by the union misleadership—and remains so to this day.

Absent from the new anti-intervention movement were the legions of student activists and the friends and relatives of the GIs, who had played a crucial role in resolving the debates over policy in the Vietnam coalitions.

This presented a structural problem for this coalition different from that in the days of the Vietnam War. It was necessary to accommodate the needs of democratic participation in this new situation.

In the absence of massive numbers of students or fresh forces from the unions, the antiwar coalition meetings could not consistently attract large numbers of antiwar activists.

Small coalition meetings could easily be dominated by tiny sectarian political currents seeking to impose their own political platform on the coalition—with no concern for the consequences of their actions.

At one small meeting of the San Francisco coalition, for example, a proposal was narrowly approved which threatened to drive out the representatives of the labor movement.

The meeting voted to recommend including representatives from the Salvadoran FDR/FMLN and from the Nicaraguan FSLN as speakers at the San Francisco rally. With the agreement of the representative of the Salvadoran FDR/FMLN, the coalition coordinating committee wisely rejected the proposal.

There was a general recognition that

nothing must be done to make it more difficult for the trade-union officials to take their first steps in aligning with the antiwar movement. These officials were vulnerable to "red-baiting" charges by the top AFL-CIO bureaucracy.

The basis of labor's participation in the antiwar movement was the right of the Central American people to self-determination—not support for the revolutionary movements in those countries. The six central labor councils threatened to withdraw from the coalition if a representative of the revolutionary movement from El Salvador was introduced at the rally in his official capacity.

Willing to accommodate the valid concerns that had been raised, the coalition leadership voted instead to invite the representative of the Salvadoran FDR/FMLN to speak—but in his role as an exile trade unionist whose name is on the death list.

This flexible tactical approach satisfied the overwhelming majority of the San Francisco coalition. By making this kind of decision, the coalition was able to retain its unprecedented labor and community support and build a broad mass action.

The Mobilization for Peace, Jobs, and Justice succeeded in bringing out 50,000 people on April 20, 1985. This extremely successful action contributed to the objective process of changing consciousness in workers' ranks that will ultimately transform the unions into instruments for class struggle.

April 25, 1987

The current planned actions for April 25, 1987, will be on a national scale. Events like the contragate scandal will no doubt contribute to make these the biggest demonstrations yet against U.S. intervention in Central America and U.S. support to apartheid in South Africa.

The endorsement of this demonstration by 24 international union presidents is historic. It reflects pressures from the rank

and file against the war and austerity policies of the government and the necessity for unions to search for allies against the employers' anti-labor offensive.

The labor bureaucracy has been responsible for the decades-long series of setbacks to the powerful American labor movement. The top labor officialdom has traditionally put the interests of American capitalism above those of its members.

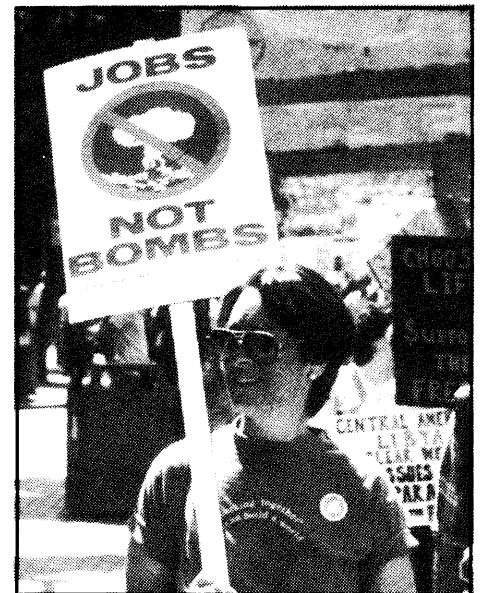
But the importance of current efforts to reestablish the working-class tradition of united action against a common enemy cannot be overestimated. It is part and parcel of the education of workers, who will be impelled to overcome division in their ranks in the big labor-capital confrontations looming on the horizon.

So far the U.S. capitalist class still proceeds with great caution against the workers, just as they must proceed carefully to carry out their imperialist agenda. They grudgingly show their great respect for the explosive power of American workers by testing the ground carefully at each step of their anti-labor offensive.

But the developing world capitalist economic crisis forces the American ruling class to pursue their anti-working class agenda at home and abroad with ever-greater ferocity and intensity. In this context, an upsurge in labor combativity can be triggered at any time. A massive outpouring of people against the outrageous disregard of legality and public opposition to U.S. foreign policy revealed by the contragate scandal will help ripen political consciousness.

Whatever the course of events, one thing is certain: Big struggles are not far down the road. The workers' united front will be an important tool for overcoming the obstacle of bureaucratic misleadership.

The upcoming antiwar mass actions in Washington, D.C., and San Francisco, made possible by an intelligent application of the united-front tactic, provide another lesson for workers in the coming struggle for political power against capitalist injustice. ■



Socialist Action/Joe Ryan

# Don't miss an issue!

## Subscribe now to Socialist Action

**A monthly newspaper with a working-class perspective**



- 12 months for \$6
- 6 months for \$3
- Enclosed is a \$ \_\_\_\_\_ contribution.
- I want to join Socialist Action. Please send me more information.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Tel. \_\_\_\_\_

Send to: 3435 Army St., Rm. 308, San Francisco, CA 94110

# Aquino victory conceals continuing gov't crisis

By ROBERTO PUMARADA

The Feb. 2, 1987, approval of a new constitution in the Philippines barely conceals the continuing crisis of the government of Corazon Aquino.

In the preceding two weeks, her troops had fired on a demonstration of 10,000 farmers demanding land. Nineteen were killed at the Mendiola Bridge, where in late 1983, the same army, then commanded by Ferdinand Marcos, shot down 11 marchers.

The Jan. 22 shootings put a damper on illusory hopes in the "progressive" character of a regime unwilling to purge the dictator's army and incapable of instituting meaningful change in the lives of the working people. Though not engineered by Aquino, the massacre underscored her government's open shift to the right and the ascendancy of the army in Philippine politics.

In the crisis of confidence which followed, five members of Aquino's Human Rights Commission resigned, along with one of her spokespersons in the negotiations with the National Democratic Front/New People's Army (NDF/NPA).

## Army's tenuous loyalty

One week after the Jan. 22 massacre, pro-Marcos army troops rebelled, citing Aquino's "coddling" of the NDF/NPA.

Ironically, two days after these troops surrendered, the NDF announced that it was abandoning the peace talks and allowing the 60-day ceasefire to lapse. Thus, the major achievement of the liberals in Aquino's regime—a truce in the 18-year war between the Philippine state and the peasant guerrillas of the NPA—lies in shambles.

Both the Mendiola massacre and the aborted mutiny which followed reveal that Aquino exercises minimal control over an army grown powerful through two decades of Marcos rule. The revolt confirms the precariousness of the Aquino-army alliance three months after the ouster of Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile.

Although Chief of Staff Gen. Fidel Ramos successfully isolated Enrile and perceptibly pushed the government to the right, important factions in the army remain unappeased. While more extreme elements openly revolted, others disobeyed Aquino's orders to attack the mutineers. In the end, the stalemate was broken by a rebel surrender.

The resumption of war in the countryside can only strengthen the more reactionary sectors of the army.

## Roots of Mendiola massacre

"The Mendiola massacre," stated the NPA in ending peace talks, "mirrors the continuing contradiction and conflict riving Philippine society. It manifests the inherent inability of an elite government to heed the people's fundamental demands." (*Los Angeles Times*, Jan. 31, 1987)



Members of the New Peoples' Army (NPA). Aquino victory at polls also indicates resumption of war in the countryside.

These demands—jobs, land, and national liberation—stem from the devastated condition of Philippine workers and peasants. According to *Food First*, 75 percent live in poverty. One thousand children a day die from malnutrition or preventable diseases.

While unemployment hovers at 18 percent of the work force, an additional 40 percent work less than half time. On the sugar-producing island of Negros, alone, 300,000 workers are jobless. Those who do find work are mercilessly exploited. In one free-trade zone, a worker who yearly produces \$72,000 in goods receives only \$222 in monthly wages. (*Philippine News*, Dec. 10-16, 1987)

The Jan. 22 peasant demonstration was a reaction to the new government's neglect. Marcos' discredited "land reform"—for which only 16 percent of tenant farmers could qualify and less than 2 percent

received land—has not been replaced.

The average three-acre plot given to recipients pales in comparison to the 16,000-acre plantation owned by Aquino's family, let alone the 74,314 acres planted by Castle & Cook or the 59,448 farmed by the Del Monte Corporation.

Millions of peasants fleeing these conditions have transformed the outskirts of Manila into a vast shantytown and swelled the ranks of the NPA.

## The new constitution

The NPA's decision to resume armed struggle coincided with a major Aquino victory in the recent polls. The new constitution keeps her in power for six more years, thus placing Aquino's bourgeois rivals on the defensive and giving her supporters an edge in the upcoming May and August elections.

The new charter reflects the unstable coalition which succeeded Marcos. Despite the upsurge of "people power" which overthrew the dictatorship, the new constitution was drafted not by a democratically elected constituent assembly, but by a narrow committee picked by Aquino and dominated by the ruling class.

Instead of confronting the challenge to Philippine independence crystallized by the U.S. military presence in the country, the document allows U.S. bases to remain undisturbed until 1991, with their future left up to a senate—which will no doubt be dominated by interests historically subservient to the United States.

As the Philippine ambassador explained to the *Wall Street Journal*, even the "nuclear-free Philippines" provision, which could prevent effective U.S. use of the

bases, would be waived if contrary to the interests of the Philippine ruling class.

Lukewarm "nationalism" is expressed in provisions granting "preferential" treatment to Philippine businesses while simultaneously allowing continued penetration by multinational capital.

The concerns of the peasantry are given a gratuitous nod, while landlords are assured "just compensation" for land reform. In the same spirit, the constitution generously allows "legal" strikes.

Also included is an extensive bill of rights which must be read not only in the context of the Mendiola massacre, but in the aftermath of the 2000 victims of counterinsurgency operations since the fall of Ferdinand Marcos.

## For or against Aquino?

In light of recent events, it is ironic that many Philippine leftists supported the new constitution as a bulwark against the resurgence of the right. The nationalist coalition BAYAN, torn by dissension, took no position.

Yet, important sections of the mass movement opposed ratification and began to distance themselves from Aquino. Besides the NPA, these included the May First Movement (KMU), the largest trade-union federation; the Peasant Movement of the Philippines (KMP), which called the Jan. 22 march; and the People's Party (PnB).

The Feb. 2 plebiscite was less concerned with the content of the new charter than with testing Aquino's popular support. Unlike the Nicaraguan constitution, the document was hardly distributed, much less discussed.

Nonetheless, the vote confirmed Aquino's appeal. To the urban middle class and the Catholic Church, which provide her base, Aquino not only represented the "February revolution," but also a "third way" between dictatorship and the NPA.

Her appeal also captured the working people, although support from this quarter had begun to wane even before the Mendiola massacre. The aborted coup, however, stirred fears of a Marcos restoration and more than compensated for this dip in support. Fully 75 percent of the electorate endorsed the new charter.

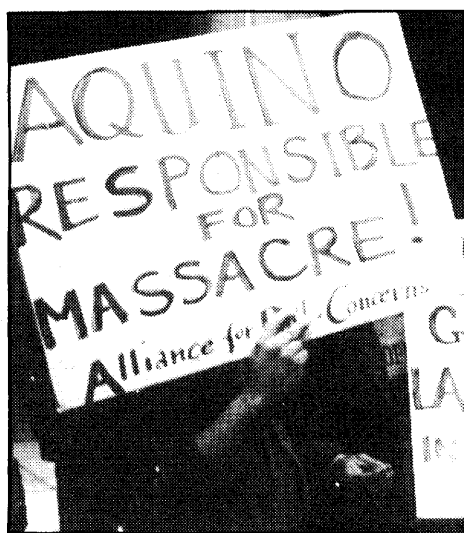
## The armed struggle

An important component contributing to Aquino's success has been the inability of the workers' movement to clearly counterpose itself to Aquino's liberals as well as to Marcos supporters.

For "tactical" reasons, its leaders have tended to give political support to Aquino against an unreformed army. As a consequence, the former "elite opposition" has retained the initiative despite its unfulfilled promises.

As Aquino executes her pledge to the U.S. Congress to "take up the sword of war" against the NPA, the "democratic space" opened up by the fall of Marcos can only narrow.

Farmer, labor, and human-rights activists will encounter renewed repression. The government increasingly sees them as no more than an adjunct of the guerrillas. But heightened repression will further erode the illusions on which the Aquino regime is based.



Socialist Action/Joey Ryan

On Feb. 7, our friend and comrade Tom Gustafsson died in Stockholm, Sweden, of pancreitis. He was 39 years old.

Tom was a founder and leader of the Socialistiska Partiet, the Swedish section of the Fourth International. For the past six years, he was also part of the central leadership of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International.

Tom was a tireless fighter for world socialism from the time he became politically active at the University of Lund in the mid-1960s.

Tom plunged into the solidarity movement with the Vietnamese Revolution. He was on the barricades in Paris in 1968 at the time of the student revolt and general strike. And he was in Czechoslovakia at the time of the 1968 Soviet invasion, where he witnessed the futile attempts by Communist Party leaders to reform the ruling Stalinist bureaucracy.

## Tom Gustafsson: 1947-1987

# A revolutionist who will be sorely missed

These big events were to shape his thinking and lead him to Trotskyism and to the Fourth International.

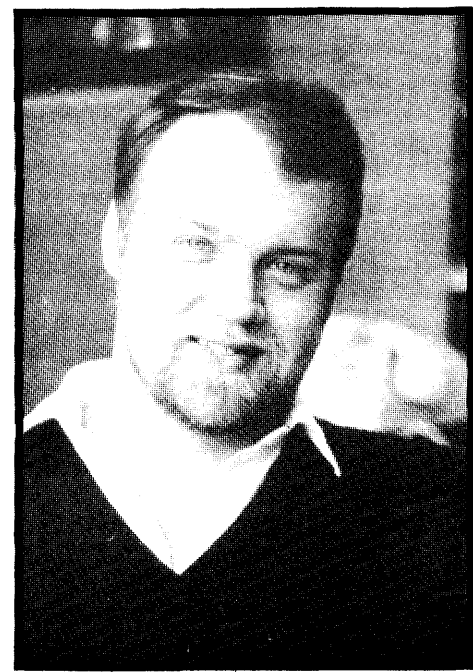
For 22 years, Tom was an active builder of the Swedish section—mainly as a political fulltimer, but also as a metalworker and trade unionist.

As a central leader of the Fourth International, Tom was an active participant in the big political debates inside the world movement. Tom rejected the abandonment by the leadership of the U.S. Socialist Workers Party (SWP) of Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution, the programmatic

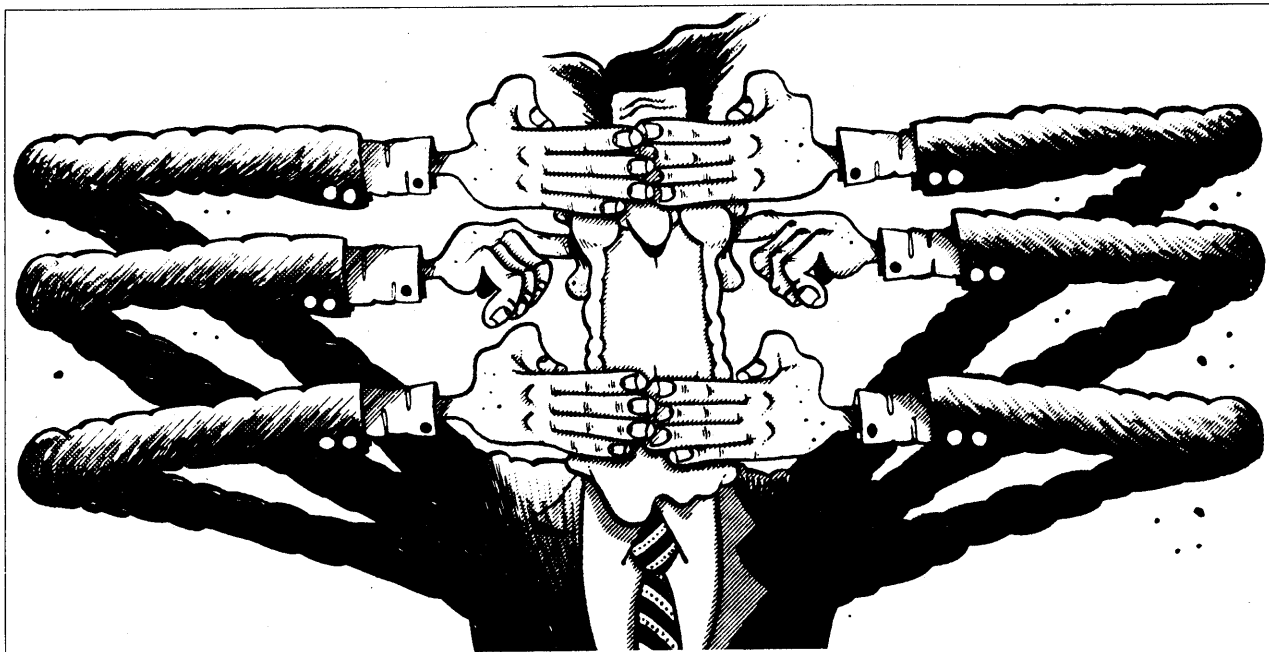
bedrock of the Fourth International.

Those of us in Socialist Action who knew him over the years recall with special pride the political fight Tom waged in 1983 and 1984 against the mass expulsions of oppositionists from the SWP. Tom played an important role in ensuring the continuity of Trotskyism in the United States.

A disease was finally able to conquer Tom's strong physique. But the example of his life, his determination to push forward against all odds, will remain an inspiration for us in the years to come.—The Editors



# S. African military gets help from U.S., Israel



WE'RE USING ALL AVAILABLE HANDS TO DEAL WITH SOUTH AFRICA..

By W.I. MOHAREB

Is the South African state militarily self-sufficient? For some years now, Pretoria and the big-business press have claimed it is.

But Marxists know that no national economy is self-sufficient—especially in the "high tech" military arena. Without such international support, the South African state would quickly fall.

The British newspaper, *The Independent*, disclosed in December that the United States arranged an airlift of some 60 tons of weapons—including machine guns and rocket launchers—to South African units in Namibia and near Pretoria.

The event has since been hushed up by the media. But other reports have leaked through. Last year, the American Friends Service Committee offered a report to the United Nations on two aspects of arms aid to South Africa—direct sales of military and police equipment and transfer of technology.

The report concluded that U.S. and other multinational corporations continue to give Pretoria access to "much of the equipment it needs to make arms—the high-tech building blocks of modern weaponry—which include computers, micro-processors, instrumentation equipment, electronic components, and sub-assemblies for use in larger systems."

The report also pointed out that at least 33 of the top 100 U.S. military contractors had operations in the South African state. They included nine of the 10 largest

U.S. industrial monopolies: Exxon, General Motors, Mobil, Ford, IBM, Texaco, Chevron, DuPont, and General Electric.

Although several of these corporations recently sold out their direct operations to local consortiums, most of them continue to trade with South Africa.

The report also documented several instances of imperialist sales of technology with military or police uses. Examples included sales of communications systems, integrated circuits, and technology necessary for assembly of semi-conductors.

## The Israeli connection

The Israeli state, the world's ninth largest arms supplier, sells about 5 percent of its military exports to South Africa—at least \$50 million worth per year. In addition to direct arms sales, Israel supplies technology-data packages containing the designs for missiles and other weapons systems—which are then assembled inside South Africa.

South Africa's new Cheetah reconnaissance jet was produced in collaboration with Israel Aircraft Industries. According to *Jane's Defense Weekly*, the aircraft uses avionics and communications equipment supplied by the Israelis.

The Israeli state also serves as a major conduit for arms transfers from other countries, as the recent revelations of U.S. arms sales to the Iranian regime confirm.

In recent years, for example, Israel has sold American-

made weapons to South Africa to refit its military speedboats. According to *The Washington Post*, the U.S. government approved the trade because of South Africa's strategic role in patrolling sea routes around the Cape of Good Hope.

Israeli sub-contractors are also believed to have played a crucial role in the building of a \$300-million "electronic fence" on the border with Namibia. Much of this technology originally came from the United States. In addition, both the U.S. and Israeli armed forces have provided training for police units in South Africa.

## Joint spy operations

"The United States," reported *The New York Times* (July 23, 1986), "working closely with British intelligence, has provided South Africa with intelligence about the banned and exiled African National Congress, according to current and former government officials."

A "senior administration official," who was unnamed, "categorically denied" the intelligence sharing. But even the skimpy information in the *Times* made a liar of the official. A special focus of the intelligence sharing with Pretoria has been the regional activities of the South African Communist Party and of the Soviet Union, Cuba, and other workers' states.

The July 23 *Times* article also unintentionally provided strong clues of yet another form of support. The South African state, the article reported, "has no [independent] satellite-intelligence ability."

Since navigation and communications today are highly dependent on satellites, it is extremely likely, if not certain, that imperialism is providing Pretoria with the necessary hardware and software for minute-to-minute access to at least some of its satellites.

The data is used to guide warplanes, ships, rockets, and artillery—as well as for communications. Pretoria's bombing raids on Zambia, Mozambique, and other African states would be impossible without this support. (The American Friends' report cited "navigation gear" as one category of known U.S. arms sales since 1981 to the South African state.)

## Financial support

Fear of revolution may have slowed the number of large, long-term loans to the apartheid state. But Pretoria's wide-ranging international military transactions are inconceivable without the cooperation of banks and other imperialist financial institutions.

This includes long-term loans, letters of credit, and other instruments facilitating sales and purchases. Almost all imperialist banks have either a direct presence in South Africa or correspondent relations with South African banks.

Last month, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzak Shamir indicated his government would "phase-out" its arms sales to South Africa. But Shamir's promises should engender no confidence. The United States and Israel—as well as the Western European capitalist governments—already ostensibly subscribe to the "mandatory" 1977 United Nations embargo on arms sales to Pretoria.

Recently, dockworkers in Southampton, England, refused to load a government-approved shipment to Southern Africa. Actions of this type, coordinated by the labor movement worldwide, can provide needed solidarity for the Black people of South Africa in their struggle for freedom. ■

By SEAN FALK

## Elections held in Ireland: Sinn Fein alters stance

Parliamentary elections took place in the 26 counties of the Southern Irish "Republic" on Feb. 17. A main issue before voters was the present economic crisis and government austerity measures. Unemployment stands at some 20 percent, compared with 10 percent five years ago. About 30,000 people a year are forced to emigrate.

For the first time in 65 years, Sinn Fein—commonly described as the political wing of the Irish Republican Army (IRA)—sought direct parliamentary representation for its policy of "a 32-county Democratic Socialist state." Its candidates were instructed to take their seats in the Irish Dail (parliament) if elected to office.

Sinn Fein fielded 27 candidates under a broad program of social change that declared: "A united and independent Ireland is vital to the social, economic, and political development of the Irish people."

Unfortunately, Sinn Fein was banned from radio and television despite the fact it is a legally registered party. None of its candidates were elected to the Dail.

The former policy of refusing to sit in parliament was established in 1922, when the six Northern counties were detached from the Irish Free State and maintained under British control. In that year, when the new government in Dublin signed the

Anglo-Irish treaty, Sinn Fein condemned the Dail as a "collaborationist" parliament.

Since Ireland was cut in two, in Sinn Fein's view, neither the Dail in Dublin nor the government set up in Belfast could represent all the Irish people. For that reason, they said, Sinn Fein members would not take their seats in either body when elected.

It is highly doubtful that Sinn Fein will abandon its abstentionist stance in the North, although it has taken seats on county and municipal councils there for years. Gerry Adams of Belfast, the president of Sinn Fein, is an elected member of Parliament in London, but he has not taken his seat. Sitting in a legislature that has no real mandate to govern the Irish people would be a betrayal.

## Breaking out of isolation

But this policy has led Sinn Fein to isolation in the southern 26 counties, where the Irish majority looks on the Dail as their government. In arguing for ending the policy of abstentionism in the South, Gerry Adams said it was "the only feasible way to break out of our isolation, to make

political gains...to develop our organization and our struggle."

At the November 1986 Sinn Fein congress the motion to permit candidates to take seats in the Dail passed by 249 delegates to 161, with 38 abstentions. This was over the required two-thirds needed.

In voting for the new policy, the majority affirmed that Sinn Fein will not abandon the armed struggle in the North. An Army Council of the IRA, the first in 17 years, approved the non-abstentionist policy in advance, illustrating the inter-dependence of the two.

"The IRA freedom fighter and the Sinn Fein freedom fighter are one and the same," said Martin McGuinness, who the British accuse of being the secret "IRA chief of staff."

But some die-hard abstentionists were not convinced. Crying, "never, that is what I tell you, never!" former Sinn Fein President Rory O'Brady walked out of the congress with a small minority of 30 delegates to found what he called Republican Sinn Fein.

Two other organizations, the Irish Republican Socialist Party and Peoples

Democracy (Irish section of the Fourth International) decided not to oppose Sinn Fein candidates in the election. This is an illustration of unity where it counts.

It remains to be seen, however, how far the Republican movement will progress toward the development of a revolutionary program and involvement in the mass struggle of the working class.

As the famed leader of Irish revolutionary socialism, James Connolly, put it in 1916, "You could raise the Green Flag tomorrow above Dublin Castle, but unless you set about the organizing of a socialist republic, your efforts would all be in vain." ■

## Distributors of Socialist Action in Canada:

**Alliance for Socialist Action**  
229 College St., Suite 208  
Toronto, Ontario  
M5T 1R4  
(416) 535-8779

**Alliance for Socialist Action**  
Box 2728  
Winnipeg, Manitoba  
R3C 4B3

**Alliance for Socialist Action**  
Box 12082  
Edmonton, Alberta

**Alliance for Socialist Action**  
P.O. Box 76916 Station S  
Vancouver, British Columbia  
V5R 5T3

By RALPH SCHOENMAN

# Israel, Zionism, and the Palestinian revolution

Few states in the world today are more repressive than the Zionist state of Israel.

The ruthless plan to eliminate the organized social existence of the Palestinian people was set forth by all major Zionist spokespersons beginning in 1880.

Leaders of all components of the Zionist movement—from Vladimir Jabotinsky to David Ben-Gurion, from its "right" to its nominal "left"—have relentlessly pursued the liquidation of the Palestinian people.

R. Weitz, the head of the Jewish Agency's Colonization Department spelled out this policy unmistakably in 1940:

"It must be clear that there is no room for both peoples in this country. Our solution is a Palestine without Arabs....Not one village, not one tribe should be left."

Thus, by 1948, before the state of Israel was actually declared, the Zionist militia—the Irgun and Haganah—had seized three-fourths of the land of Palestine and expelled virtually all those inhabiting it.

In the beginning of 1948, there were 475 Palestinian towns and villages. Of these, 385 were razed to the ground—quite literally wiped off the face of the map.

Ninety Palestinian villages and towns remained. They were swiftly denuded of land—confiscated without compensation.

## A colonial-settler state

At the time of the partition of Palestine in 1947, the Zionists owned 6 percent of the land. Through sustained terror against the largely unarmed Palestinian population, they gained control of over 90 percent of the land.

In what is now Israel, the Jewish Agency administers this land under regulations which require that to own, rent, lease, or share-crop land, one must prove at least three generations of maternal Jewish descent.

These laws differ little from those of the racist apartheid state of South Africa. And, ironically, they differ little from the "Aryan blood" laws of Nazi Germany.

The oppression of the Palestinian people is enforced by the Israeli state, not only in territories occupied since 1967, but in all of Palestine.

Palestinians may be detained without charge, held without disclosure of their arrest, and sentenced without any evidence other than that secured by confession.

Hence, Amnesty International was to report that in no other state of the world is institutionalized torture as well documented as in the Zionist state of Israel.

Since 1967, over 300,000 Palestinians in the West Bank have been imprisoned under conditions of torture.

## A Palestinian "mini-state?"

Many of the leaders of the Palestinian



Socialist Action/Kathleen Onan

**"Zionists have relentlessly pursued the liquidation of the Palestinians."**

movement today advocate the establishment of a Palestinian "mini-state." They call this a "two-state" solution to the plight of the Palestinian people.

A Palestinian "mini-state"—disarmed, policed, and economically dependent on U.S. imperialism and the Zionist regime itself—is no solution for the Palestinians. An enlarged hamlet for Palestinians, a "Bantustan," leaves the Israeli state in place—as racist and oppressive as before.

A Palestinian "mini-state," moreover,

will never be accepted by the Zionist regime. There is no component of the Zionist spectrum with the faintest interest in surrendering territory intended for any form of Palestinian sovereignty that has any meaning.

Such delusions may be comforting to those predisposed to make allowances for a colonist state in Palestine. The Zionists themselves are too busy planning the fragmentation of Syria and Iraq, the absorption of the East Bank—emptied of Pales-

tinians—and the occupation of Kuwait.

There are 2 million Palestinians living in occupied Palestine. The Zionist state can not exist without subjugating or expelling them.

The leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) has shown itself unable to develop a strategy for the mobilization in Palestine of the Palestinian and Jewish masses against the Zionist state.

Neither the "moderate" leadership of Yasir Arafat, the "progressive" leadership of the Popular and Democratic Fronts, nor the "dissident" Fateh rebels have formulated a strategy for the Palestinian people independent of the rotten capitalist regimes of the region.

The PLO leaders at one moment curry favor with imperialism and its agents, the country-selling regimes of the Arab East, and at another indulge in random acts of force. Each course is designed, misguidedly, to induce imperialism into endorsing the establishment of a Palestinian "mini-state."

But these regimes—from Syria to Jordan to Egypt—regard the Palestinian revolution as a clear and present danger. They understand that the extraordinary struggle of the Palestinian nation—even under the nationalist PLO leadership—is a reminder to their own suffering people of what is to be done and who is in the way.

## A democratic-secular Palestine

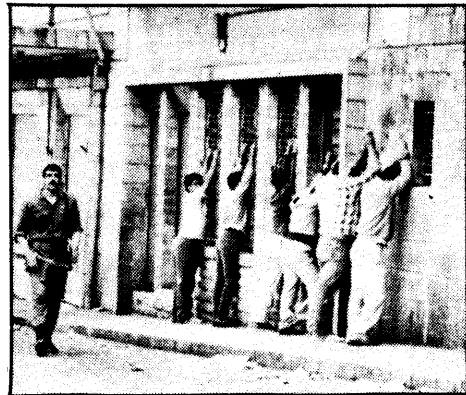
A revolutionary Palestinian leadership should struggle, as many do, for the dismantlement of the Israeli state.

It should develop a program which begins the process of the self-activation of the Palestinian masses and their Jewish class allies. The mobilization of the Palestinian people in strikes and demonstrations—with international participants—would find its echo among Jewish workers.

A PLO faithful to its promise of a democratic-secular Palestine would include in its leadership those anti-Zionist Jews who have fought the settler-colonial state. In this way, the Jewish masses themselves would be able to see who really speaks for them, and who offers them a way out of perpetual war, insecurity, and deprivation.

The Palestinian revolutionary movement can only advance by hammering out a new strategy based on combining the Palestinian national struggle with the struggle of the workers and peasants of the whole Middle East.

## Palestinians under renewed attack



By JIM RICHTER

The Palestinian struggle is once again under heavy attack.

On one level, there is a real danger of direct U.S. military intervention in the region in the aftermath of the kidnappings of four Beirut professors, three of them Americans.

In early February, the U.S. Sixth Fleet was mobilized just 50 miles off the coast of Lebanon. Two U.S. aircraft carriers were

prepared for possible air strikes against Lebanon, Syria, or Iran.

These recent sabre-rattling threats against the Arab and Palestinian masses are not to be dismissed.

In January 1984, U.S. battleships indiscriminately pounded civilian areas in the Moslem sectors of West Beirut with their offshore cannonades. The battleship *USS New Jersey*, alone, inflicted hundreds of casualties.

## Refugee camps under siege

Meanwhile, a major attack on the Palestinian movement has been unfolding in Lebanon in the refugee camps of Burj-al-Barajneh, Chatila, and Rashidieh. Since last October, these camps have been under siege by the Syrian-backed Amal militias.

According to the Agence France-Presse, some 50,000 Palestinians in these camps were cut off from sources of food and medical care by the Amal militias.

Reports by French journalists describe people trapped in basements and tunnels who were forced to eat rats and dogs. The Amal forces repeatedly blocked convoys

bringing food into the camps.

Throughout this period, moreover, Israeli planes continued to bomb Palestinian civilian targets throughout Lebanon—including the refugee camps near Tyre and Beirut.

On Feb. 12, Israeli planes attacked Mieh Mieh, near the port of Sidon in southern Lebanon, killing two Palestinians and injuring eight others.

## Who are the Amal militias?

Amal is the organization whose forces, frequently with Syrian and Israeli aid, have repeatedly attacked Palestinian organizations and camps since the late 1970s.

While Amal forces have fought Israeli troops, their unrelenting attacks on the Palestinians demonstrate they are not a revolutionary or anti-imperialist force.

Syrian President Hafez al-Assad has been only too happy to give the Amal militias support in their murderous onslaught against the Palestinians. The Syrian government is intent on destroying any force in Lebanon not under its control or dependent on its patronage.

Assad wants a divided client state in Lebanon that will ensure Syria's place among the Arab capitalist governments in future negotiations with the Israeli state.

## Resistance not broken

The Palestinian masses have suffered terrible blows at the hands of the Israelis and Arab reactionary governments. But,

against all odds, the Palestinian resistance has not been broken.

In recent months, mass protests against Israeli occupation have broken out in the West Bank and Gaza. The growing desperation—and militancy—of the Palestinians is revealed by the increased number of attacks on Israeli soldiers by youth who are acting on their own and are armed only with stones or screwdrivers.

Ninety-three percent of the Palestinians living in territories occupied by the Israelis since 1967 still consider the banned Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) to be their legitimate representative, according to a September 1986 poll by the Australian Broadcasting Corporation.

Yet, despite this heroic resistance, the Palestinian liberation struggle has been led into a blind alley by the policies of the leadership of the PLO, which has consistently relied on the Arab capitalists for the advancement of the Palestinian cause.

But each attempt to build an alliance with reactionary Arab governments—whether it be Jordan's King Hussein or Syria's Assad—has ended in disaster for the Palestinians.

This has revealed that any attempt to win the national and democratic demands of the Palestinian people must be part of a wider struggle against the bourgeois Arab regimes in the region—as well as against the Zionist state of Israel.



# New book on U.S. women's movement is strong on facts, but weak on conclusions

By MILLIE GONZALEZ

*A Lesser Life: The Myth of Women's Liberation* by Sylvia Ann Hewlett. William Morrow and Company, 1986, 461 pp., \$17.95.

In "A Lesser Life," author Sylvia Ann Hewlett presents us with an exhaustive up-to-date analysis of the economic problems of women in the United States.

The book is full of grim statistics. For example, the wage gap between women and men in America has not shifted in 50 years; women earn \$.64 to a man's dollar. The majority (57 percent) of female-headed households live in poverty. The United

## BOOK REVIEW

States is the only industrialized country that has no statutory maternity leave.

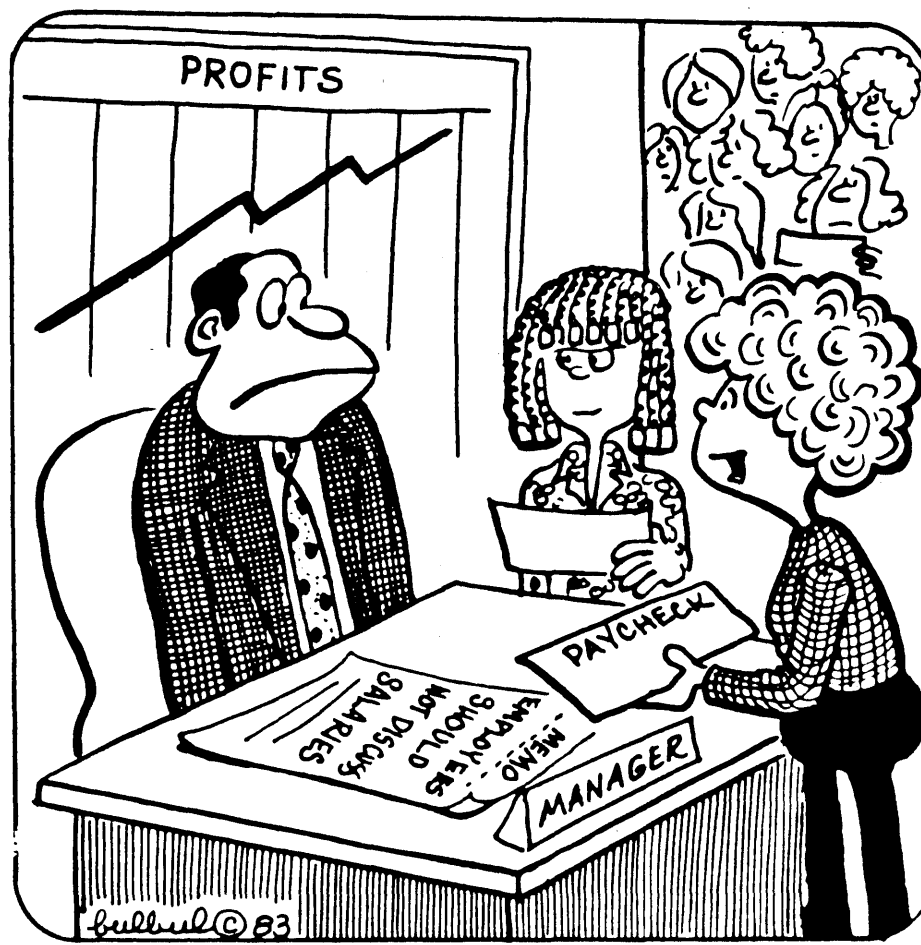
The book contrasts the United States with four Western European countries (Britain, France, Italy, and Sweden) and their economic policies concerning women.

In Sweden, a woman is entitled to nine-months maternity leave, while taking home 90 percent of her pay. In addition, seniority rights on the job are protected. A pregnant woman in Italy is entitled to five-months paid leave with 80 percent of her pay ensured. A woman is also allowed an additional six-months leave at 30 percent of her pay, if needed.

### Goals of feminist movement

In France, a woman is entitled to a three-month paid leave with additional maternity benefits, such as access to public child-care facilities. Overall, these countries provide important support services for single women and for women raising children with partners.

Hewlett believes that the comparative



WE WANT TO DISCUSS THE GENDER GAP!!

lack of economic benefits for women in the United States is due in part to the nature of the goals of the American feminist movement. "The overwhelming preoccupation of the American women's movement has been on equal rights and reproductive freedom, while the central focus of most European feminists has been on the material conditions of life," the author states.

Hewlett points out that rights and

benefits were won by European women as part of the broader social struggle led by a trade-union movement bolstered by its strong roots in the socialist movement. This same struggle led to the founding of mass working-class parties.

In the case of Sweden, the author points out, "Women's interests were bound up with those of larger organizations seeking general universal suffrage, such as the Social Democratic Party, formed in 1889 to



represent the industrial working class, and the Liberal Party, established in 1902 to represent the lower middle classes and urban intellectuals."

### An incorrect conclusion

The facts are true. But Hewlett incorrectly applies the European experience to politics in this country. She uses these facts to attack the women's movement here for what she sees as an insufficient commitment to the Democratic Party.

In the United States, politics are monopolized by the twin parties of capitalism, which have never represented anyone but the ruling rich. There is no labor party here.

The Democratic and Republican parties cannot be compared with the Social Democratic parties of Europe which, despite their reformist and often reactionary leaderships, are based on the trade-union movement.

In this country, social change has always been won in the streets. No Republican or Democratic politician ever gave us the right to vote or the right to control our reproductive rights without a fight. In fact, all the gains of the past are constantly being undermined by both parties.

It was under Jimmy Carter that funding of abortion for poor women was taken away. This important fact is ignored by Hewlett, who criticizes NOW for not endorsing Carter "until the last moment in the 1980 election" and thus failing "to mobilize against Reagan."

Throughout the book, Hewlett places the onus on the women's movement and the trade unions for their failure to improve the material conditions of working women. But the blame here is misplaced. The onus lies squarely on the capitalist economic system—not on the victims of that system.

Unfortunately, the top leadership of the women's movement—as well as the trade-union movement—has tied itself to one of the parties of the capitalist class. This misguided strategy will not bring about the democratic reforms needed for working people in this country.

In celebration of International Women's Day, March 8, we are printing the following article about one of the pioneers of the socialist and feminist movements in the United States: Antoinette Bucholz-Konikow.

March 8 was chosen in commemoration of the women garment workers' strike of 1908. On that date, women swept through the Lower East Side of New York City demanding the vote and an end to sweatshop conditions.

By SUZANNE FORSYTH

Dr. Antoinette Bucholz-Konikow was a founder of the American Trotskyist movement and a participant in all of the major American revolutionary parties of her time. She was also a pioneer of feminism and women's health.

Born in central Russia in 1869, Antoinette Bucholz grew up in Germany and attended medical school in Switzerland. In medical school she was exposed to socialist ideas. At age 17 she joined Plekhanov's Emancipation of Labor Group, Russia's first Marxist organization.

She married a fellow medical student, William Konikow. They moved together to Boston in 1893 and were deeply involved in the unemployed movement and with other Russian Marxists and intellectuals.

After some time as a member of the Socialist Labor Party, Konikow joined a group of socialists led by Eugene V. Debs—which founded the Socialist Party (SP).

In 1908 Konikow was one of the first members of the SP's newly formed Women's National Committee. Through this committee, she helped direct efforts to organize women into trade unions and the women's suffrage movement.

After graduating from Tufts College,

## Antoinette Konikow: Pioneer of socialism and feminism

Konikow resumed her medical practice in the Boston area. She fought against puritanism and ignorance that led to women's sexual repression. She believed that sex was a normal, healthy activity.

Konikow wrote several handbooks on women's health, including *Voluntary Motherhood*, which sold more than 10,000 copies in its first three editions. She wrote: "A woman can never obtain real independence unless her function of procreation is under her own control."

Konikow carried on an international discussion with birth-control advocates and doctors and even developed an inexpensive spermicidal jelly. Her weekly-illustrated lectures on women's health, reproduction, and contraception eventually led to her arrest for exhibiting contraceptives in public.

Although the SP formally opposed World War I, the right-wing leadership went along with President Wilson's war policies. Konikow was part of the left wing, which actively opposed the imperialist war.

She toured the United States, speaking to immigrant workers—often in German—as a symbol of international solidarity. This was at a time when German was eliminated from school curriculums, and other antiwar socialists, such as Kate O'Hare and Eugene V. Debs, were sentenced to long prison terms.

At the height of the government's anti-

communist repression, in 1920, Konikow participated in the founding of the American Communist Party.

International events such as the failure of the Second International to oppose the First World War and the success of the Russian Revolution had convinced her of the need for a new International and new revolutionary parties based on the Bolshevik model.

### Defended Trotsky

In 1928, the Boston membership of the Communist Party was given a lecture demanding the expulsion of Leon Trotsky from the Comintern. Although Konikow was unaware of Trotsky's criticisms of the Stalinist bureaucracy, she was the only member who spoke out from the floor of the meeting to defend Trotsky.

Konikow argued that the local branch could not vote to endorse Trotsky's expulsion without seeing his political program. A few days later, she was sent word of her expulsion from the party.

Konikow started to organize a group of ex-members and prepare a bulletin. But before the first bulletin went to press, the group saw a statement by James P. Cannon and other expelled national committee members.

They, too, had been expelled for defending Trotsky. Cannon's group supported Trotsky's call for an International Left Opposition to oppose the undemo-



Antoinette Konikow

cratic Stalinist bureaucracy and its counter-revolutionary foreign policy.

Konikow was able to read Trotsky's document, and her group soon joined with Cannon's. Konikow was an active builder of the Boston branch of this new organization—eventually to become the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), to which Socialist Action traces its origin.

Throughout the 1930s and '40s, she wrote articles for the SWP's newspaper, *The Militant*, explaining women's specific oppression and especially focusing on the right of women to control their bodies.

After World War II, Konikow chaired the American Committee for Workers Relief, which sent food, clothing, and medicine to anti-fascist workers who had been in prisons and concentration camps during the war. She was an honorary member of the SWP national committee when she died in 1946 at the age of 77.

By PAUL SIEGEL

In conjunction with the 200th anniversary of the U.S. Constitution, Socialist Action is printing a four-part series of articles by Paul Siegel on the topic of democracy in America.

In the first installment, which appeared last month, Professor Siegel reviewed many of the numerous struggles through which democratic rights were won in this country. He pointed out, however, that democracy remains extremely limited and superficial under capitalism. Socialists aim to extend and deepen this democracy.

Paul Siegel is Professor Emeritus at Long Island University. He has written several books on political and literary themes, including "Revolution and the 20th-Century Novel" (Pathfinder Press, 1979) and "The Meek and the Militant: Religion and Power Across the World" (Zed Press, 1986).

Following the Civil War, the enormous increase of wealth of the industrial capitalists more and more made the United States a plutocracy that was democratic only in form.

Today, according to a study commissioned by the Federal Reserve Board in 1983, the wealthiest top 10 percent own 84 percent of this nation's assets and the richest 1 percent own half of the country's wealth.

Political democracy was fought for under the banner of "equality under the law." Every one, it was said, should be subject to the same laws; no one should have any special privileges by birth. But from the very beginning, the difference between rich and poor made this supposed equality a sham.

The essence of the matter was well expressed by the French socialist Anatole France, who wrote ironically, "The law in its majestic equality forbids the rich as well as the poor to sleep under bridges, to beg in the streets, and to steal bread."

With the present concentration of wealth, "equality under the law" becomes more of a sham than ever. The "rich and well-born" do not merely "check the imprudence of democracy," as the early American statesman Alexander Hamilton once noted. The rich effectively run the country for their own interests.

It is not a matter of a conspiracy that, once unmasked, can be thwarted. It is a matter of wealth attracting power as a magnet attracts iron filings.

### The Rockefeller dynasty

Let us take just one of the few powerful families that rule America: the Rockefellers. All of the many denunciations and exposures of John D. Rockefeller Sr., whose unscrupulousness and ruthlessness made him the most hated man of his generation, did not prevent him from building a dynasty that has been a central part of the country's aristocracy of wealth in this century.

Its power is indicated by a statement of Sen. Robert Taft of Ohio—a representative of midwestern capital—who was so piqued by his defeat in the 1952 Republican Party convention that he complained bitterly, "Every Republican candidate for president since 1936 has been nominated by the Rockefeller Chase Bank."

The Rockefeller influence has not been confined to the Republican Party. Both



John D. Rockefeller

# How the rich came to control America



Kennedy and Johnson sought to have David Rockefeller become secretary of the treasury. David Rockefeller, although declining the position, "helped convince Kennedy to adopt" tax measures that resulted in "a massive redistribution of income from the poor to the wealthy." (quoted from "The Rockefellers: An American Dynasty" by Peter Collier and David Horowitz)

Most of all, however, the Rockefeller family has exerted its influence in politics through those who came from the executive levels of Rockefeller-supported institutions.

Such policy technicians as Walt Rostow, the foreign affairs adviser of Johnson; Henry Kissinger, the foreign affairs adviser and secretary of state of Nixon and Ford; and Zbigniew Brzezinski, the foreign affairs adviser of Carter, were the products of Rockefeller institutes and think tanks.

Through such persons, as well as through their own direct influence, the Rockefellers have been in on most of the epoch-making decisions of contemporary history.

### Aristocrats in Congress

The aristocracy of wealth to which the Rockefellers belong also controls Congress, which is closely tied to it. The lower house of Congress is called the House of Representatives, but its members are scarcely representative of the people.

It would be very hard, even with a magnifying glass, to find an auto worker or a steel worker among members of Congress. Most of them are corporation lawyers or businesspeople and have business interests that are directly affected by the legislation they enact.

This is even more true of the Senate, almost half of which is made up of people who either have a million dollars or close to a million dollars.

The high aristocracy of wealth, however, does not generally so much engage in the dirty work of politics as provide the wherewithal for it. Every wheeler-dealer politician is well aware that money greases the wheels of politics.

The enormous amount of money that it takes to gain visibility in election campaigns is for the most part supplied by business interests that often give money to the Republicans and Democrats at the same time. Whichever side wins, they win.

Both parties are devoted to shoring up the capitalist system and take for granted that workers thrown out of work will bear the brunt of the recessions inherent in the

system. The differences between them are minor and subject to change.

### "Friends" of labor?

Because the Republican Party has been more prone than the Democratic Party since the time of Franklin Roosevelt to cut social welfare, the Democratic Party, cultivating the image of the friend of the working people, has received the votes of many workers, of Blacks and other racial minorities, and of the poor.

But while Roosevelt was fulminating against the "economic royalists," more than 400 of them gave money to his party in the 1936 election campaign. Among the large contributors, as Ferdinand Lundberg pointed out at the time in "America's 60 Families," were members of the ruling families—the Dukes, the Pattersons, the Reynolds, the Vanderbilts, the Whitneys, and the McCormicks.

These were mainly representative of light industry and mercantile interests concerned with the retail market. Meanwhile, heavy industry and banking mainly backed the Republicans.

So, too, today, whatever differences between different sections of the ruling rich are reflected in the two major parties they control, both of these parties express the broad interests of the capitalist class as a whole, not the interests of the workers and the middle classes who vote for them.

The labor bureaucracy has often been said to be a partner in an alliance within the Democratic Party, but it is a partner only in the sense that a horse is a partner of its rider. The Democratic Party is no more a party of labor than a company union organized by a boss is a real union fighting for the rights of its members.

The company union may hold an annual picnic with free beer and speeches about the virtues of the partnership existing between the company and its workers, but that does not make it an instrument of the workers.

### All in the family

The two-party system turns everything to its use. Some years ago, legislation was enacted that set a limit on the amount of money that could be contributed to political parties and that provided for government financing of them. This supposed reform actually served to bolster the two-party monopoly, not to weaken it.

Government money goes to parties in accordance with the votes they received on the principle that those who have shall get



Franklin D. Roosevelt

and those who have not shall remain in poverty.

At the same time, political action committees devoted to specific political causes but ostensibly not controlled by political parties receive a tremendous amount of money from the wealthy. Through these means the political system is more than ever controlled by big capital. The politicians compete as to who is to get the most gravy, but they are united in supporting the system that dispenses gravy.

### Winner takes all

The two major parties also maintain their monopoly through state laws that require other parties to engage in the difficult task of obtaining large numbers of signatures within a short period of time before they can appear on ballots. Often even after they obtain these signatures, they are thrown off the ballot on technicalities or legal ambiguities. If they engage in costly law suits, these are usually decided after the elections.

The elections themselves are on a winner-take-all basis so that small parties do not get a share of representation proportionate to their votes. This is an ideal way of keeping small parties small, as many persons do not like to "waste" their votes by voting for a party that does not have an immediate chance of winning.

Instead they often vote for someone they don't really want in order to avoid someone else to whom they are strongly opposed. Thus no matter who is elected, it is someone they don't want.

The mass media give the Republican and Democratic parties another important means to maintain their political monopoly. This topic will be discussed further in next month's issue of Socialist Action.

On Jan. 23, the San Francisco branch of Socialist Action organized a symposium on "Theater and the Fight for Social Justice." About 90 people heard a panel discussion on the topic by five playwrights and directors. The opening presentations were followed by an "open mike" discussion in which other theater workers took part.

The panelists were Philip Bennett, artistic director, Bennett Theatre Lab; Oskar Eustis, dramaturge and resident director, Eureka Theatre; Joan Holden, playwright in residence, San Francisco Mime Troupe; Carol McCord, managing director, Oakland Ensemble Theatre; and Leland Moss, director of "The Aids Show" at Theatre Rhinoceros.

Below, we are printing major excerpts from the opening remarks given by Joan Holden and Oskar Eustis.

## Joan Holden:

Art can inspire social action. I've had some solid proof. In the late '60s, from time to time, the Mime Troupe used to get draft cards when we passed the hat in the parks.

We get letters: "I thought you would like to know that after we saw your play 'Electro Bucks,' we organized a small local of electronic workers in our plant in Oregon." That kind of response.

But in our society, art more often sustains action than inspires it directly. The cases in which a play can point to a direct action to take—to vote or to occupy the student union, for example—are relatively few. But the ability of theater to rekindle people's energy to renew hope, to combat social amnesia, and to be a joyful example of struggle is always there.

We always hear that we're living in an age of apathy. I don't think it's apathy so much as fear. Theater has marvelous means to make people look at horrible truths. If theater does that with joy and talent and art, it makes them not so fearful. When people see other people confronting these issues straight on, they can do it themselves.

We got a "fan letter" recently that said: "With all the images of death that are constantly thrust on us by society in the mass media, your plays present us with images of life."

I go to plays because I expect to see some kind of image of my life, to learn something about my life, to see it reflected by people who have thought about it and who can present it artistically.

People often go to Mime Troupe plays like they might go to church. They are looking for something different, I expect, than a "great artistic experience." There's some kind of affirmation, of ritual exchange going on.

In the death culture that we live in, any play in which life is of value encourages people to resist the forces of destruction. I think that's true of plays that are vastly different from the kind of plays that I do.

I happen to be a political propagandist, and I will argue for hours with any one that says that propaganda can't be art...Shakespeare wrote propaganda.

But other people have different visions. They don't write about the day's news, and yet the images they present about the life we live are important for people to see. The way that their plays value life affirms

# Socialist Action forum: "Theater makes us confront issues"



Christine Taccone

## Mime Troupe presents African spy thriller

Eloise Chitmon, Edris Cooper, and Jesse Moore perform in the San Francisco Mime Troupe's "The Mozamgola Caper." The new comedy was inspired "by the similarity of U.S. policy in Nicaragua and the front-line states in Africa," says co-author Joan Holden. "Mozamgola" plays at San Francisco's Theater Artaud through March 8 and moves to Cincinnati, Atlanta, and other cities in April. Call (415) 285-1717 for more information.

people's belief that life is worth struggling for.

Traditionally, the social responsibility of the artist is not at question. The classic view is that all good art is "pleasant and useful." Or that it "holds a mirror to society." Just like you need to look at yourself in the mirror in the morning, for



Joan Holden

some reason we need to see our lives mirrored on the stage or in the movies.

We're looking for reflections. And I think that all plays which reflect reality and value life sustain social action in that they combat despair.

Theater is one of the few forums that we have left. It's one of the few places where strangers are brought together by a live experience. It can be a powerful inspiration.

## Oskar Eustis:

What we do at The Eureka Theatre is obviously quite different than what the San Francisco Mime Troupe does. I often think that we are afforded a blessing and a luxury by the fact that we are in a city where the Mime Troupe exists—with its almost reckless optimism and its faith in change in the audience and change in this country.

In every different social setting, theater serves very different roles. I think that the first responsibility of any theater artist is to ascertain who their audience is and what impact they can actually have on that audience.

We are operating under a kind of tension. We at The Eureka Theatre definitely consider ourselves a left theater. At the same time, we exist within a very bourgeois context. We are a regional repertory theater—we perform six plays a year, we sell subscriptions, we put out nice glossy brochures—all the kinds of things that a bourgeois theater does.

Within our community, we are trying to raise certain kinds of questions with plays. All of the productions that we do that are most successful are productions that focus on a certain kind of questioning process.

They are not didactic in the sense of trying to convey or teach information. Joan used the word "reflection." What I think our theater can do is a process of reflecting our society and the personal lives of the people in the audience. We can then allow people to reflect upon their own personal and social choices and, hopefully, come to a higher level of struggle.

A concrete example was in a play we performed, Carol Churchill's "Top Girls." The play was addressed to an audience that is already consciously feminist. The question was, "Is it possible to be a feminist without being a socialist?"

Now, that play I am particularly pleased about because I think it directed a question to our audience that was geared to precisely who our audience is. I think that the great majority of our audience would describe themselves as sympathetic to the basic goals of feminism. So, we've got the starting point for a dialogue.

A play that didn't work, however, was a play "Neither Fish nor Fowl," which I translated from the German. It was about the printers and the labor movement. In

Germany it was an enormous success. Here, we got a lot of union members down to our production, but almost exclusively from among the printers' trade.

The play was asking a question that was not posed on the agenda of the American labor movement as precisely as it is before the German movement. The question was—given the increasing automation and resulting decline in the quality of work, can the workers movement take up questions beyond wages and simple economic demands?

One of the rocky roads that we are now engaged upon is the process of trying to get away from our dependency upon British and German plays, which are the products of considerably more developed theatrical, cultural, and political movements than in this country. We have made a conscious attempt to try to develop and work with American writers, of which there are all too few.

We are also trying to create a role for ourselves within the American regional theater movement. Within that field, we are trying to establish ourselves as a voice on the left.

## Help out on the sub/fund drive!

If you don't yet have a subscription to *Socialist Action*, now is the time to get one.

We've just begun a three-month subscription drive. As we go to press, barely one month into our drive, 225 new subscriptions have already been turned in.

If you have friends who might be interested in *Socialist Action*, why not buy them a subscription, too? And if you'd like a whole bundle to sell in your area, contact our national office or the branch nearest you.

We've also launched a national fund drive with a goal of \$15,000 to be met by March 31. To date, we have received over \$13,000 in pledges. This money is needed to help improve our paper and to allow us to publish timely pamphlets.

Help us make our goal please by sending in a donation—large or small! Thank you for your continued support.

## Where To Find Us

### Boston Socialist Action

P.O. Box 1046 GMF  
Boston, MA 02205  
(617) 391-7087

### Chicago Socialist Action

Box 80B, 2520 N. Lincoln  
Chicago, IL 60614

### Cincinnati Socialist Action

P.O. Box 37029  
Cincinnati, OH 45222  
(513) 272-2596

### Cleveland Socialist Action

P.O. Box 6151  
Cleveland, OH 44110  
(216) 429-2167

### Detroit Socialist Action

P.O. Box 19613  
Detroit, MI 48219

### Grand Rapids Socialist Action

P.O. Box 3505  
Grand Rapids, MI 49501

### Los Angeles Socialist Action

P.O. Box 60605  
Terminal Annex  
Los Angeles, CA 90060  
(213) 250-4608

### Minneapolis Socialist Action

P.O. Box 14087  
Dinkytown Station  
Minneapolis, MN 55414

### New York Socialist Action

P.O. Box 20209 Ca. Finance  
693 Columbus Ave.  
New York, NY 10025

### Phoenix Socialist Action

P.O. Box 5161  
Phoenix, AZ 85010  
(602) 263-5190

### San Francisco Socialist Action

3435 Army St., Suite 308  
San Francisco, CA 94110  
(415) 821-0458

# "Amerika"—14.5 hours of prime-time McCarthyism

By ALAN BENJAMIN

ABC's mini-series "Amerika" is the latest in a long succession of anti-communist films once again in vogue in the 1980s.

Though cut from a more sophisticated cloth than "Rambo" or "Red Dawn," it is no less transparent in its reactionary message. Even Elliot Richardson, former attorney general and secretary of defense under Richard Nixon, called the series "xenophobic" and "McCarthyesque."

The premise of the series—a Soviet takeover of the United States through Soviet and East German advisers, plus troops from Central America, which now is "Greater Cuba"—is absurd. Its goal is to whip up jingoistic hysteria to justify the Star Wars buildup and U.S. intervention in Central America. After all, isn't Reagan pushing his war budget precisely to avoid a "Soviet takeover" of the continent?

The series is also designed to divert our attention from the great ills caused by capitalism—and to place the blame for these injustices in the wrong place. The America of 1997 in ABC's series bears a striking resemblance to the America of 1987. There is high unemployment, drug and alcohol addiction, homeless on the streets scrounging for food, and farmers who have gone bankrupt.



But this devastation wasn't caused by the "Russkies," as "Amerika" would like us to believe. It is the product of an irrational and outdated system of production—capitalism.

Much has been written and said about this series. Some decry the portrayal of the United Nations troops as Soviet "pawns." Others regret that this series is cutting across the possibilities of "détente" with the Soviet Union.

What bothered me the most was the Cold War identification of socialism—of Lenin and the Russian

Revolution—with totalitarianism and Stalinism.

In one scene, the townspeople of Milford, Neb., turn away in disgust as the banner of Lenin is paraded through town. The message is unmistakable: Lenin and the advocates of socialism are responsible for thought-control, forced confessions, and concentration camps.

This message of "socialism equals Stalinism," is, of course, not new. Ever since the degeneration of the Russian Revolution under Stalin, the capitalists and their apologists have pointed to the very real horrors of the Stalinist regime in the Soviet Union to say: "That is socialism. The American way of life is better."

But the authentic socialist movement, as it was conceived by Marx, Engels and Lenin, is the most democratic movement in history. It has nothing to do with Stalinist oppression.

It is capitalism which continuously undermines the limited and formal democracy that exists in this country. It is capitalism which attacks the democratic rights gained by working people through their struggles.

The Stalinist bureaucracy in the Soviet Union has perverted and corrupted the meaning of socialism, giving the right-wing producers of "Amerika" a club to go after the socialist movement.

Even though the TV ratings for "Amerika" went way down as the series progressed—a sign of the healthy response by the public to this propaganda barrage—the show unquestionably created great confusion about the meaning of socialism among millions of viewers.

Today, when working people are seeking a solution to their increased misery under capitalist exploitation and oppression, we must rescue the meaning of socialism from both the capitalist warmongers and the Stalinist bureaucrats. Only in this manner will we be able to restore its appeal to the best sentiments of working people. ■

By ZAKIYA SOMBURU

Richard Wright's brilliant and intensive masterwork, "Native Son," is the most crucial literary indictment of racial and class oppression I have ever read. Now a movie has been made of the novel.

The setting is Chicago during the Great Depression. Bigger Thomas, the protagonist of the novel, lives in a one-room, rat-infested tenement with his mother, sister, and brother. They are faced with the absurdity of having

## MOVIE REVIEW

to eke out an existence on "relief" in the most technologically advanced country on the planet.

Bigger, in his own way, understands that he and his relatives are victims of institutionalized racism. It is all the more galling to him that he has to take a job as chauffeur to the Daltons, the family that owns the tenement the Thomas family lives in. Bigger feels his right to manhood has been usurped. Usurpation of a person's rights by those in power is a recurrent theme in the book and film.

Bigger's duties involve driving Mary Dalton, the dilettante communist daughter of the family, to a rendezvous with her communist lover. Mary gets drunk, and

## Film fails to depict harsh realities of "Native Son"

Bigger has to carry her up to her room. At this point, her mother, who is blind, appears.

Bigger, out of legitimate fear that Mary would reveal his presence to her mother, panics and accidentally suffocates her with a pillow. His presence in a white woman's bedroom would entail dire consequences. Then, to cover up the unintentional killing, Bigger burns Mary's body in the furnace.

Inevitably, pursuit is followed by capture, trial, and conviction. In the course of flight, Bigger kills Bessie, his girl friend. This second murder, which is missing from the film, is considered less important by the authorities since the victim was Black.

Innocent though he was, racism would condemn Bigger as a criminal.

One of the weaknesses of the film is that it does not adequately bring out the social background of the time. The domestic racial terror, the Jim Crow laws, and the lynchings in the South are only hinted at. And the

everyday horror during the Depression era for Afro-Americans in Chicago is underdeveloped.

Some of the deletions in the film—due, perhaps, to a limited \$2-million budget—create the false picture of Bigger as a lone sociopath.

But it was life in capitalist America, with its Jim Crow laws and its debasement of the Black man, which created the Bigger Thomases. Bigger had been mentally castrated and manhandled from the cradle.

For Wright, the criminal in the tragedy was the capitalist system of racism and oppression. Wright felt that "all Biggers are the products of American society and are thereby 'native sons.'"

I strongly recommend reading the novel before seeing the film. Many important segments from each section of the novel (fear, flight, and fate) are deleted in the film. Reading the novel first will enable the viewer to better understand Wright's depiction of the harsh realities of Bigger's world. ■

## Our readers speak out

### Likes series

Dear editor,

I was very moved by the recent long feature in the February issue of *Socialist Action* by Paul Siegel, "Does democracy really exist in capitalist America?" I plan to share it with friends and scholars who live here.

I admire your paper and have distributed copies, xeroxed articles, and shared issues. I am looking forward to reading the next article by Paul Siegel. Best wishes to you all.

Alene Smith,  
Santa Cruz, Calif.

### Sad state

Dear editor,

I read with great interest the article titled "Union stops steel bosses' demands for concessions"

in the February issue of *Socialist Action*.

I am a union activist of 10 years, and I applauded the efforts by the new AEIF local leadership to mobilize the membership, their spouses, and their community against Armco Steel. It sounds like the odds against the non-affiliated union were tremendous from the outset, especially since the union had never struck Armco!

By organizing a fightback, the Middletown local was able to win an extension of the current contract. The company didn't get what it wanted. But the workers got no wage increase, and there is a possibility of wage re-openers in 1988 and '89 if the company suffers losses.

The best of us in the labor movement sometimes forget that unless unions make gains when contracts expire, workers fall behind. This is not only evident in terms of money, but in terms of job security and classification rules. All companies begin

eroding the contract as soon as the ink has dried.

It is a sad statement about the concessionary-bargaining period we live in, that just maintaining what we have is considered a victory by the workers—as was the case at Armco Steel.

Still, it seems to me that we must keep our standard for victory what it should be: *When we make gains over the last contract.*

Karen Schieve,  
San Francisco, Calif.

### Black press

Dear editor,

The title under which my article on Howard Beach appeared in last month's *Socialist Action*, "N.Y. media depicts victims as criminals," could be taken to suggest that the entire New York media did this.

This was not the case with the

Black press, which tens of thousands of Black New Yorkers turn to each week for news, commentary, and analysis.

Both the *Amsterdam News* and the *New York City Sun* featured interviews with Alton Maddox and Vernon Mason, the two courageous Black attorneys under attack for defending the victims. Articles and editorials in both papers consistently exposed the D.A./police/mayor/media attacks as racist.

The *Amsterdam News* also featured an interview with Cedric Sandiford, whose version of the Howard Beach events was ignored by the big-business press.

Chris Butters,  
New York City

### 12 indicted

Dear editor,

On Jan. 28, 3000 people, mainly Black youth, marched in



New York City to protest the racist attacks in Howard Beach. It was a militant and spirited rally.

Since that time, the special prosecutor in the case has handed down indictments against 12 white teenagers. Notably absent from the list of the indicted was the driver of the car that fatally struck Michael Griffith. Each suspect now faces charges adding up to at least four years in jail, and several face 25-year terms.

John Palmieri,  
New York City

# Haitians press fight to complete revolution

By HAYDEN PERRY

One year after President-for-Life Jean-Claude Duvalier was driven from Haiti, workers and peasants are still mobilizing and organizing to complete the revolution.

The ruling junta, selected by Duvalier and the U.S. Embassy, hopes to maintain the system of profit making and privilege—with only a few cosmetic changes. But the desperately poor Haitian masses are determined to totally change their lives by any means necessary.

The revolution that sent Duvalier fleeing on Feb. 7, 1986, was a spontaneous outburst by students, youth, and the poor. No political parties existed to give direction or support.

In 28 years of murderous rule, the Duvaliers had repressed parties, practically wiped out the trade unions, and murdered or exiled every potential opponent.

For over a quarter of a century there was not a crevice in Haitian society where an opposition movement could take root and grow. Then, in the 1980s, the situation changed.

Young Catholic priests embraced liberation theology, opposed the church's support of the wealthy, and began to confront the immediate material problems of the poor.

Young Haitians, seeing a ray of hope in their desperate circumstances, joined over 2000 grassroots church-sponsored groups that studied the Bible, worked on projects to improve their community, and pondered the future of Haitian society.

It was not so easy for Duvalier to strike at church committees that were engaged in improving farming practices or obtaining clean water. But confrontation was inevitable. In January 1986, Baby Doc shut down the Catholic station, Radio Soleil.

Students demonstrated in support of the station. Some were killed by soldiers. They demonstrated again in greater numbers, bringing the desperate poor of the shantytowns with them. In the classic pattern of mass action that has toppled dictators from Teheran to Manila, more and more people demonstrated in more and more towns throughout Haiti.

Duvalier's killer squads, the Tonton Macoutes, had no strategy to confront 50,000 enraged demonstrators who engulfed them. These killers now thought only of their own safety, leaving Duvalier alone and defenseless.

Washington observed all this, and thought only of the danger of instability in this impoverished country. Duvalier had to go, not because he was a dictator, but because he could no longer preserve order.

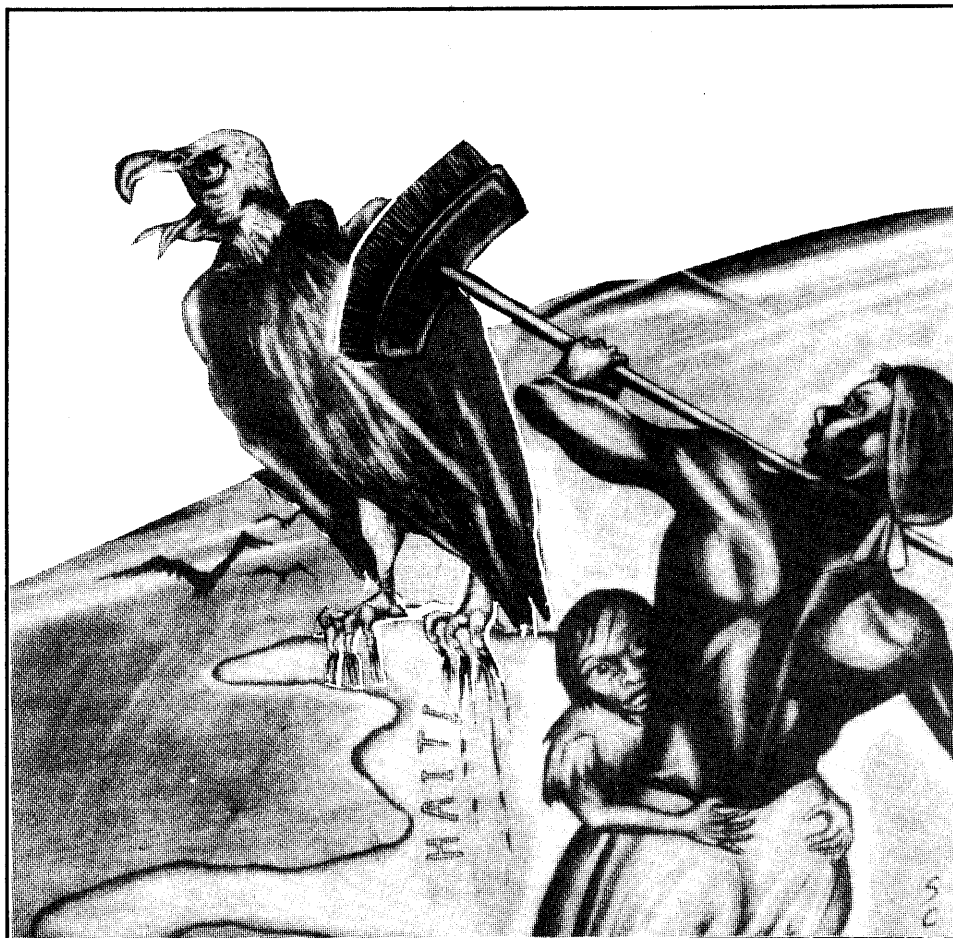
The U.S. government found Baby Doc's replacement right in the National Palace. General Henri Namphy, chief of staff of the Haitian Army, and two other army officers formed a Governing National Committee (CNG).

Three civilians were added for window dressing. Only one, Gerald Gourgue, head of the Haitian League for Human Rights, had ever opposed Duvalier. He quit in a few weeks.

## Namphy uses tear gas

The new ruling junta has not even begun to confront Haiti's horrendous problems. Preserving their privileges and repressing "outbursts of the populace" have been their main concerns.

Washington came to the junta's aid with a \$400,000 consignment of riot-control equipment, night sticks, tear gas, and two-way radios. But the masses stayed in the streets, determined to physically uproot all vestiges of Duvalierism. When the army shot at demonstrators in April 1986, the



workers moved into the wealthiest suburb of Port-au-Prince and erected barricades.

Alarmed, Washington saw it was time for concessions. The Tonton Macoutes were officially disbanded. Three of the most tainted CNG ministers were forced to resign. Some political prisoners were released, and political exiles were allowed to return.

But no concessions touched on Haiti's problems of poverty, illiteracy, and malnutrition. For 135 years a thin layer of light-skinned professionals and small businessmen have grown rich by appropriating the surplus of the vast mass of Haitians who are farmers.

Politics have consisted in coups and counter-coups that have shifted control among various segments of the elite. The vast majority of the Haitians have been excluded. They speak Creole, rather than French, the language of the educated elite.

Haitian peasants have subsisted on tiny individual plots that are losing their fertility year by year. Absolutely nothing effective has been done to stop the deforestation and erosion that has turned much of this once fertile country into semi-desert.

The small farmers live so close to the edge of starvation that thousands had to quit the land when their hogs were slaughtered in 1982, at U.S. insistence, when a swine-

flu epidemic threatened American hog raisers.

Ninety-seven percent of the Haitians are classified as poor. Fifty percent, or 3 million, are so desperately poor they seldom eat more than once a day. Over 80 percent are illiterate. Unemployment runs over 50 percent. In the year since Baby Doc left, living standards have declined even further.

In 1977, there were only 145,000 industrial workers out of a population of 6 million. Some are sugar-refinery workers, others work in American-owned sub-assembly plants making toys or baseballs for \$2 or \$3 a day.

Duvalier permitted only an impotent AFL-CIO-sponsored union to exist. This appendage of U.S. imperialism lost all credibility when it declared its neutrality between the CNG and the masses. Now a new union, the Independent Federation of Haitian Workers (CATH), has emerged. It has demanded a doubling of wages and the ouster of pro-Duvalierist managers. The bosses are resisting the union, firing all those who sign up.

## Demand end to repression

With an easing of the worst Macoute terror, political parties and groups have proliferated.

The majority are ad-hoc groups formed in the midst of the recent struggles. The

Committee for Democratic Initiative (KID), the Seventh of February Patriotic Club, the Haitian Liberation Party (PLH), and the Haitian Democratic Party (PDH) are some of the parties contending for support.

On Jan. 29, 1987, over 250 parties and groups met for four days to debate the future course for Haiti. Many of these parties call for elections with universal suffrage, a constituent assembly to write a new constitution, a bill of rights, and majority rule.

The CNG and Washington see that majority rule in Haiti, where over 90 percent are poor, would mean the eventual end of class privileges. However much they may give lip service to the idea, they have no intention of granting it.

The CNG has already reneged on the measures of democracy it has been forced to grant. Only parties with 2000 members are recognized. Reporters who criticize the government can be arrested. A campaign against the "menace of communism" is regularly broadcast over Radio Soleil and other media.

Elections have been put off to November 1987. The government hopes that workers by then will become weary and apathetic. Meanwhile, a new right-wing party, PREN, headed by former leaders of the Macoutes, was launched in November 1986.

The Haitian masses were far from apathetic toward this right-wing threat. Once more they came into the streets by the thousands. Once more the army was directed to shoot. This only brought on more demonstrations, this time with demands that the CNG resign.

The government was forced to retreat and announce that PREN was dissolved. But at the same time, the military junta tightened its hold on the National Palace.

## Ready to fight to the end

The mood of Haitians on the anniversary of Duvalier's fall was somber, in contrast to the euphoria a year ago. They have seen only a worsening of their conditions of life.

The ruling CNG used the anniversary to take the offensive against the workers. General Namphy warned against "demagogic and anarchistic forces that wish to direct the nation on a path of chaos." He backed up his warning by arresting five left-wing critics of his government at the University of Haiti and raiding dissidents' homes.

Workers stood in the streets, stones in their hands. Businessmen shuttered their stores, expecting violent confrontations to mark the anniversary.

After a year of confrontation, the Haitian masses are still mobilized and ready to fight to the bitter end.

Gaining universal suffrage and full civil rights is only the first step in the struggle to change everything. The workers are pushing demands that would end the domination of the privileged elite.

Land reform, a minimum wage, nationalization of the import-export trade, expropriation of the large corporations tied to the U.S. multinationals, a campaign against illiteracy, and increased taxation on the wealthy are among the economic demands being pressed.

Haitian women are also speaking out for themselves. Thirty thousand of them marched in Port-au-Prince last April 2. They demanded equal rights for women and an end to sexual harassment on the job.

In some towns in Haiti, the workers have ousted the Duvalier-appointed officials and have set up block committees to run community affairs.

But the greatest obstacle to the completion of the Haitian revolution lies in Washington.

For nearly 20 years, from 1915 to 1936, U.S. troops occupied Haiti and ran the country. In 1965, they invaded the Dominican Republic, right next door. They are poised to execute another Grenada-style invasion whenever their grip on Haiti is endangered.

It is the duty of the American people to force the U.S. government to keep its hands off Haiti. ■



Haiti: A country oppressed by U.S. domination.