

SOCIALIST ACTION



New pamphlet
on
Malcolm X
See page 10.

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Bush & Clinton: They should run on the same ticket

EDITORIAL

Once upon a time, Democratic Party politicians were forced to make grand promises to win labor's vote. These promises had been ballyhooed under labels like the New Deal, the Fair Deal, the New Society, and the War on Poverty. But after more than half a century of unkept promises, working people became increasingly skeptical of Democrats posing as friends of labor, the oppressed nationalities, and the poor and destitute.

Meanwhile, way back in the late 1960s, the Republican Party—which had rarely found it necessary to give lip-service to the rights of workers and their unions—saw the opportunity to cut in on Democratic Party territory. The Republicans took advantage of the disillusionment of working people with the Democratic Party's unfulfilled promises to them. The Republicans began to tap into the growing

(continued on page 8)

Columbus Day 1992: Nothing to celebrate for Native Americans

By LEE L. SCHREIBER



Geronimo: He fought back.

The month of October 1992 marks the 500th anniversary of Christopher Columbus's landing upon these shores. Citizens of this nation will respond with celebrations, often elaborately staged and government sponsored, lauding the Spanish discovery of America.

Conveniently ignored will be the fact that this bewildered sailor, misjudging his destination by several thousand miles, landed on an island he did not know existed and proclaimed it "India."

Also conveniently overlooked by most Americans is the fact that this continent was at the time inhabited by roughly 25 to 50 million (estimates vary) Americans who had, indeed, discovered and lived on

this land for about 30,000 years.

So this year, 1992, is also being commemorated by the original inhabitants, the present-day survivors of the struggle against the European invaders, not as a joyous celebration but rather as one of mourning.

Instead of the descriptive term, "discovery of America," the Indian organizations have described the year 1491 as "the last good year," so that 1992 becomes the 500th anniversary of the year that the good years ended. Some American Indians or spokespersons have also described this year as marking "500 years of resistance."

Free Leonard Peltier!

And truly, the resistance continues. The struggle continues to free 47-year-old Leonard Peltier, the former leader of the American Indian Movement who was railroaded to federal penitentiaries after conviction for the 1975 murders of two FBI agents in the South Dakota Pine

(continued on page 6)

This Columbus Day is for 'Pink Mary'



Fightback

By
Sylvia Weinstein

I am going to tell you about my grandmother, "Pink Mary," who was a Cherokee Indian from Kentucky. Her father, my great grandfather, was Chief Blue Moon Mann.

When I was young and being raised by my grandmother, I was never told she was an Indian. She had married my grandfather, James Ellsworth Wright, who was English, Scots, and Irish. And that's what my family wanted the world to believe.

I was 12 years old before I knew for a fact that my grandmother was an Indian. In fact, the first inkling I got about her Indian heritage was when my uncles or my aunts would call her an "old squaw" in anger. She had long black hair; so long, she could sit on it. And she wore it around her head in braids.

I remember my aunts pleading

with her to bob her hair because she looked like an "old squaw." They wanted her to wear make-up—but she wouldn't. They wanted her to shorten her dresses—she wouldn't. She was that way as long as I can remember her. Something in her wouldn't let her change to keep up with the changing world.

Now, I respect that feeling. Then, I just thought she was old-fashioned and ignorant.

She gave birth to 18 children. She had professional help, a midwife, only with the first. All the others were delivered with the help of my grandfather. She had three sets of twins, and my mother, Alice, and her brother, was one of those sets of twins.

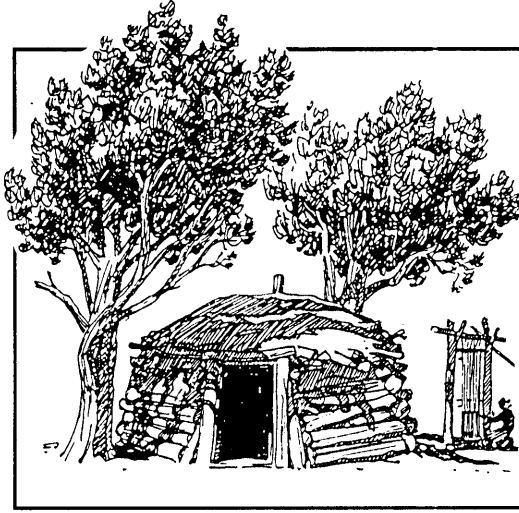
My uncle Crit, my mother's twin, was also called "the Indian." His hair was black and his eyes were even blacker. My mother had blue eyes and brown

hair. They called my uncle "the Indian" because he lived off the land in Kentucky.

When uncle Crit was 12 years old, he went into the coal mines and worked until he was 40. By that time, he got black lung disease and could not mine coal any more. But all his life he spent as much time as possible living and hunting in the deep forest of the Kentucky mountains.

He hunted and trapped squirrels, foxes, possums, and rabbits. He sent my grandmother packages of herbs, roots, and a variety of leaves to make medicine. He also sent her wild honey from a bee hive deep in the heart of the forest. Crit hated the city, unlike his brothers and sisters, who had moved to Lexington with my grandmother. His ability to live all alone (except for a hunting dog) in the great woods of Kentucky was not only not appreciated but scorned.

My mother and father had divorced and my brothers and sisters and I were left with my grandmother. My father had



American. This didn't seem to satisfy them, so they would ask what country was I born in. I told them Kentucky. They asked if I wasn't really a Polack? I told them I would check it out with my mother, because I was never told I was any other thing but an American.

When I asked my mother what our nationality was, she told me I was Irish, "Scotch," and English. Then my aunt Kitty said that actually, I was mostly Indian. I went back and informed my new friends about this, and they said I was lying, that I was ashamed of being a "Polack." I finally gave up trying to understand them or trying to explain. I was just as happy that they considered me a Polack from Pennsylvania as an Indian from Kentucky.

Nowadays, there is no shame in being part Indian. In fact, my relatives now brag about it. I wish my grandmother, "the old squaw" had lived to see the day. Perhaps that's why she would never bob her hair, wear make-up or change her way of life. She knew where she came from and was proud of it.

That was my grandmother, "Pink Mary." She was named after a wild flower in Kentucky. This "Columbus Day" is for her. ■

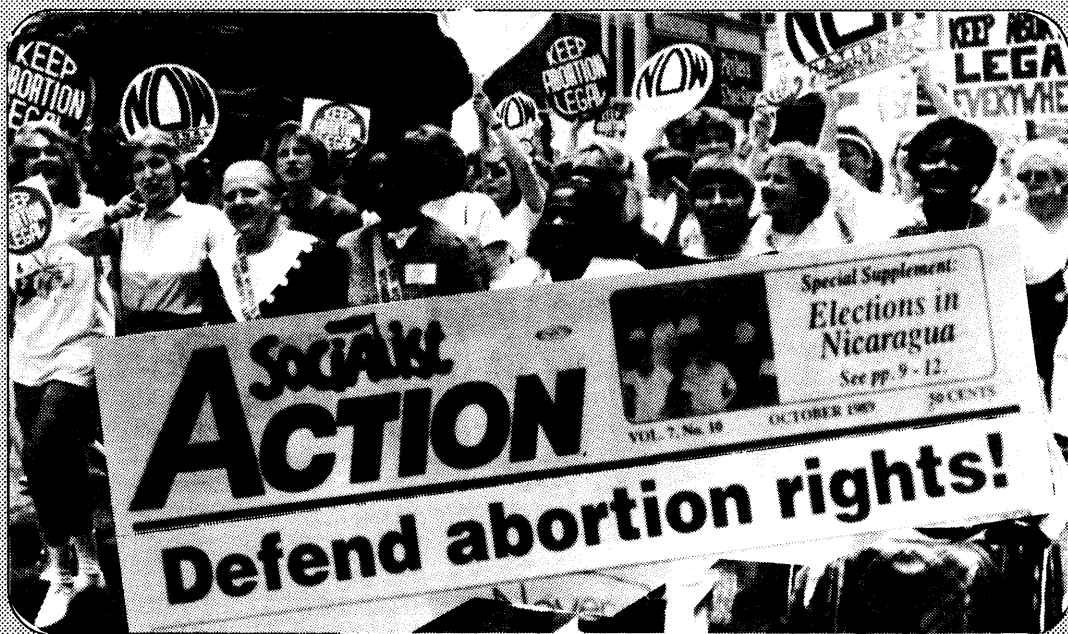
gone to live in Ohio and my mother had joined her two sisters in New York City. My brother, sister, and I went to New York for one summer when I was 12.

We stayed in a furnished apartment in Bensonhurst, in Brooklyn. We southern children became the talk of the neighborhood kids, who were all Jewish. They kept asking if we were "Polacks."

(I was to learn later that this was a derogatory name some called people of Polish ancestry. But I think many kids who used the term didn't know it was derogatory. I didn't until I was told this much later.)

The neighborhood kids asked our nationality. (I couldn't understand why.) I told them

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How taxpayers got tricked into making farmers—like Chevron—richer

(Part one of a series)

By ROSE CANARES

Water, air, and the soil in which we grow our food are resources that support all the species of the earth, and all their generations throughout time. Without them, there can be no life. So we tend to view these resources as our birthright, with access deniable to no one.

Yet under the current social order, these resources are treated as commodities—which one privileged class of people control and profit from. And if they find it “cost-effective” to dispose of waste in such a way that the water, air, or soil is polluted for everyone else, they are “free” to do so.

This is one of a series of articles I am writing, which will appear in *Socialist Action* during the next few months. Throughout the series, I will refer to the water, air, and soil collectively as the *environment*.

And the social order we live under, which adjudicates the environment in the way I just described, I will refer to as *capitalism*. In a capitalist society, everything is produced and managed, not to satisfy human needs, but in order to turn a profit for the few who are in power.

I hope to demonstrate three things in this series:

1) It is because of the capitalist system that even our environmental birthrights—water, air, and soil—are turned into commodities to be sold back to us at a profit.

2) It is because of the logic of capitalism that the environment has become so polluted; therefore, none of the solutions proposed within the context of capitalism will accomplish much.

3) The environment can only be cleaned up when society comes under the control of those of us who work for a living and do not have an investment in capitalism. I will be referring to those who work for a living, the majority of people, as the *working class*.

Water for Sale

Let's begin by looking at an example of how the environment has been appropriated under capitalism—the case of water usage in California.

California has an economy richer than all but five nations in the world. It is dominated by a \$15 billion agriculture industry. This industry was built on two things: First, the ability to move water from where it is (in the mountains and rivers) to where it isn't (in the Central Valley and southern deserts). And second, on the ability to accomplish these gargantuan feats at the expense of taxpayers.

Ten of California's reservoirs store enough water to supply drinking water to all of the state's inhabitants. What do you suppose the other 1190 reservoirs and dams are for? *Agriculture* uses 85 percent of all the water consumed in the state.

In order to create wealth from agriculture for the growers, two huge water projects were developed by the capitalists and paid for by the working class through taxes. Both created huge diversions of water from its natural course, threatening the ecology of the San Francisco Bay and delta. This bay/delta is an area that functions as a wildlife habitat for crabs, clams, fish, birds, and other aquatic life. It is also a drinking water source in its own right.

The first of the water diversion projects was the Central Valley Project. It was passed by the state legislature in 1933, and then administered by the Bureau of Reclamation. This project enabled dams and reservoirs to be built using public funds, and the water to be distributed to growers.

They passed a few restrictions to make it look like it would benefit the small farmer. For example, growers had to live on the land and could not own more than 320 acres per married couple. However, the



“The roster of growers who benefited from the Central Valley Project at the expense of taxpayers and defied the law at the same time reads like a Who's Who in corporate agriculture.”

biggest growers owned far more land than this limit, posing a contradiction. If the law had been enforced as written, it would have necessitated a large-scale redistribution of land to smaller holdings. But under capitalism, the redistribution goes in the other direction!

So the lawmakers of both big political parties, whose role is to defend the interests of the capitalists, allowed the growers to evade and defy the law. This gave them free rein to make profits from crops irrigated with subsidized water.

After almost 30 years of violations, the politicians decided to forgive the law breakers and bring the law into compliance with reality. At the instigation of U.S. Senator Alan Cranston, the growers were rewarded with an amendment to increase the limit to 960 acres.

Marc Reisner writes in his excellent book *Cadillac Desert*, “Given that more than 90 percent of the acreage violations were in California and Arizona, the point of Cranston's reform was to legalize wholesale non-compliance with federal law.”

Who benefited?

The roster of growers who benefited from the Central Valley Project at the expense of taxpayers and defied the law at the same time read like a Who's Who in corporate agriculture: Standard Oil owned almost 80,000 acres. Bellridge Oil Co. owned 30,000 acres. The Richfield Oil Company owned more than 10,000 acres. Southern Pacific—not a mere railroad, but the largest private landowner in the state—owned 109,000 acres.

And the DiGiorgio Corporation held acreage growing more commercial tomatoes than any state except Florida. (DiGiorgio's were the only holdings actually broken up by federal authorities.)

It would be a joke to refer to these corporations as “farmers.” In fact, to paraphrase Marc Reisner, these publicly financed water

projects became the nation's foremost example of welfare for the rich.

If one water project could bring the growers so much subsidized water and profits, two water projects would be even better. The second was the monstrous California Water Project. It used public funds to dam up rivers in northern California, transport water across 444 miles, and pump it uphill across the Tehachapi mountains—again primarily in the service of agribusiness.

This great “rob the poor to pay the rich” scheme was the lifelong ambition of Gov. Edmund “Pat” Brown, the father of occasional presidential aspirant Jerry Brown.

This project, which cost the state \$3 billion in 1959 dollars, was only Phase One. Jerry Brown himself during his later governorship sought to continue his father's giveaway to the rich by proposing Phase Two, the Peripheral Canal. This time it would have cost California taxpayers another \$12 billion.

Although Jerry Brown found it necessary to pander to the fledgling environmental movement, it was the environmentalists themselves who helped to defeat this project.

The senior Brown's cleverness in scheming up ways to rob the state in the service of the rich should not go unmentioned. Most notable was the Tidelands Oil Fund. Back in the 1940s, petroleum deposits were discovered off the coast of Long Beach. The state imposed an extraction tax on the major oil companies who drilled this resource. The state also signed contracts allowing the revenues to go to the city of Long Beach to cover their costs.

But, once the drilling started, they found that the oil deposits were much bigger than was first estimated, and that the tax revenues would amount to hundreds of millions of dollars. So, in 1954, Pat Brown—then state attorney general—unilaterally nullified the contract to the City

of Long Beach and appropriated the money to the state treasury.

What do you suppose he planned to do with the money—give it to the public schools? Of course not. Brown succeeded in getting the state to allot the tidelands oil money for the state water project. This amounted to an annual interest-free loan of \$25 million, repayable “whenever.” It was an open-ended deal that would continue as long as the oil was being extracted.

Brown himself later admitted that “it was another subsidy to the big farmers.” But the “big farmers” who benefited from the water subsidy were the same oil companies who had speculative land holdings in southern California, worth nothing unless they were irrigated.

To quote Marc Reisner again, “In exchange for a modest extraction tax—quickly offset by the billions they would make on the easily accessible oil—they would have their barren, worthless acreages in the San Joaquin Valley turned opalescent green. And they would get the growth, and the cars, and the freeways, that would increase the demand for and the cost of the oil!” (Not to mention profits.)

Who are these “good ole farmboys”?

I mentioned earlier that the beneficiaries of the Central Valley Water Project were corporate growers. The same holds true for the state water project. The California Institute for Rural Studies reported that in Kern County, although half of the farms receiving project water had small holdings of 160 acres or less, two-thirds of all the acreage irrigated by the project was owned by only eight companies. Guess who they were?

The largest “farmer” was Chevron USA, the main subsidiary of Standard Oil Co. of California, holding 38,000 acres in Kern Co. and 42,000 acres elsewhere in the valley.

Second place went to Tejon Ranch, whose principal stockholders are the Chandler family, owners of the *Los Angeles Times*—the main propaganda organ for these water projects. Third and fourth place went to two more oil companies, Getty and Shell.

In fifth place was the Prudential Insurance Co., which had the dubious distinction of putting all of the small olive growers out of business, mainly with the help of olive harvesting machinery developed at the University of California with taxpayers' money.

Sixth place went to the Blackwell Land Company, owned by a conglomerate of English, Swiss, and Japanese capitalists. In seventh place was a huge chemicals and food conglomerate, Tenneco, which bought up land at a fast clip once the state water project became functional. And the last of the big eight was Southern Pacific Railroad.

Many of these corporations got into agribusiness in the 1960s, when Congress offered investors a tax deduction for all expenses on a number of crops, while the trees or vines were maturing, and bearing no fruit. So a company like Prudential could realize a tax saving of around \$1 million per year—farming the taxpayers.

I have just named three ways in which the taxpayers footed the bill for corporate profits—through this investment tax break, by financing technology advances through UC, and by financing the big water projects.

This chapter out of the history of California demonstrates how life-essential elements of the environment, like water, are used and abused to turn a profit for the capitalists. And how the taxpayers, who are workers like us, foot the bill. It also demonstrates the role of the capitalist politicians in applying the power of the state in the interests of capital.

And lest you think that the problem can be solved by electing “good guys” from the lesser-evil capitalist party, I would remind you that all of the politicians mentioned here, Cranston and the two Browns, have been leading “liberals” in the Democratic Party.

The second article in this series on the environment will continue in next month's *Socialist Action*.

Calif. budget crisis 'solved;' make the poor pay for deficit

By HAYDEN PERRY

BERKELEY, Calif.—After 63 days of financial paralysis and political turmoil, California's Gov. Pete Wilson has signed a budget bill. Now Californians are surveying the social damage the bipartisan budget storm has inflicted on the state.

The devastation extends into every city and county. Every school has suffered losses. Homeless people will remain homeless, and more people will join them. The sick and elderly will have to search longer and harder for medical help. Many will not get it.

This injury to millions of poor Californians was not the result of the blind forces of nature or economics. It was a planned operation to load the costs of California's fiscal crisis onto the backs of the poor—the weakest section of working people.

The recession and a "spare the rich" fiscal policy left California short \$11 billion in the proposed 1992-93 budget. For 63 days, the Republican governor and Democratic legislature wrangled over which section of the working class would suffer the largest cuts. No one proposed raising more revenue from the wealthy.

Instead, they chopped away at the living standards of the poorest and weakest. The house-bound frail elderly, dependent on visiting home helpers, will lose 34 hours of aid a month. The helpers make only \$4.25 an hour. Both client and care-giver will suffer.

Frances Gracechild, executive director of Resources for Independent Living was quoted by the *Sacramento Bee*: "Very few people understand how grossly immoral these budget cuts are." Patti Whitney-Wise, executive director of the California Council of Churches, said, "We are taking it all from the middle and lower classes, and not sharing, not spreading the pain."

The dependent blind are among the victims. They will lose \$54 a month in subsistence aid. Undocumented farm workers will get no medical care, except for

"Even more serious is the fate of the homeless who subsist on General Assistance grants of \$291 a month. This may be cut to as little as \$173 a month for those who 'share housing.' At \$173 a month, this must be shared space on a park bench!"

extreme emergencies. All families on the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program will suffer a 4.5 percent cut on Oct 1. This means an average monthly grant of \$538 will drop to \$513. But average rents in San Francisco and Los Angeles run over \$600 a month!

Wilson wants to cut children's aid further yet, by 5.8 percent, but state and federal law dictates a minimum level. The governor is determined to get around such safeguards.

He has put an initiative on the ballot, Proposition 165, that will give the executive power to cut welfare further, and slash other social programs without legislative approval. Applicants for welfare who come from other states will get no more aid than they would have collected back home. In most cases this would not be enough to pay California rents, let alone buy adequate food. These unfortunates will probably swell the ranks of the homeless.

Wilson and the Democrats spread the pain throughout California by reducing state aid to counties by \$525 million, and aid to cities by \$200 million. For special districts and redevelopment agencies, the governor cut \$575 million.

Regulations in "bureaucratess"

Counties and cities are already strapped. The cut in aid means slashing further the

few benefits the counties still offer. It takes 500 pages of convoluted "bureaucratess" to list 100 new regulations. Desperate county officials are taking desperate measures.

The Los Angeles sheriff will no longer give free helicopter rides to those sick and injured who have to be carried to hospitals from remote areas. From now on the patient must pay the fare—\$1138, one way!

Even more serious is the fate of the homeless who subsist on General Assistance grants of \$291 a month. This may be cut to as little as \$173 a month for those who "share housing." At \$173 a month, this must be shared space on a park bench!

The devastating effect of cuts in public health services is seen in San Francisco, where \$25 million has been taken from the Health Department. Waiting times at the S. F. General Hospital will double to 16 hours as neighborhood clinics close. Mental health services will suffer the largest cuts despite the growing number of mentally disturbed on city streets.

Cuts in education

Most harmful to the future of society are the cuts in education. Disputes over the school budget paralyzed the government for 63 days. Gov. Wilson wanted to take \$2.3 billion from the state's school children. The Democrats would have cut less than a

billion.

They finally reached an very deceptive compromise. This time the schools will get the same funding as before—\$4185 per pupil. But part of the money is a loan of \$732 million. It must be paid back next year.

It is estimated that the pay-back of this and later loans will result in a loss of \$3 billion to the schools in the next three years. California now spends \$766 less per student than the national average. State schools Superintendent Bill Honig says, "The reality is that we give a lower priority to our schools than any other state."

Fewer students will be properly prepared for higher education. Those who are will find it harder to get into college. A 24 percent fee raise, added to a previous 40 percent raise, has brought the annual average cost at the University of California (UC) to \$3036. Tuition charges are expected to be raised yet again.

Even with money in hand, many young people will not get in. The university system is preparing to cut its total enrollment 10 percent, and abandon its pledge to accept the top 12.5 percent of high school seniors who apply.

The 13-campus California State University has raised fees 40 percent to \$1308; less than at UC. But getting a degree at state universities may actually cost more, because 1500 faculty members have been laid off and many classes have been cut. Often required classes are full; so a student has to take an extra year or more to complete a normal four-year program.

No one really believes that all these cuts are temporary measures that will be reversed when the fiscal crisis is over. The next budget is less than nine months away. Further cuts will be required to bring it into balance. The dream of a college education for all who want it is rapidly fading.

The California government, in effect, now denies it has any obligation to provide for its poorest citizens. The weak response of labor leaders makes our rulers think they can impose any burden on a demobilized working class.

But this is a relative and temporary condition. In time, intolerable conditions always invoke powerful reactions. The uprising in Los Angeles should serve as a forewarning. It is the heat lightning that presages more widespread social storms to come. ■

STUDENTS PROTEST CALIF. BUDGET CUTBACKS



On Thursday, Sept. 24, over 800 students rallied at San Francisco State University to protest cutbacks and tuition hikes. The demonstration was part of a statewide coordinated shut down and teach-in at all California state universities. Some of the central demands of the student coalition include: Opposition to all cuts in social services; no faculty or staff layoffs; no school privatization/voucher programs; restoration of student services; and recall Gov. Pete Wilson.

TWA agreement increases economic hardship on workers

By GERRY FIORI

Agreement was reached on Aug. 24 between representatives of the International Association of Machinists (IAM) and Trans World Airlines (TWA) on a plan to reorganize the bankrupt carrier. Similar agreements were reached with the Independent Federation of Flight Attendants and the Airline Pilots Association.

The "Turn Around Plan", as it is called, is supposed to put TWA—currently operating at a claimed loss of \$1 million a day—in a position to pull itself out of Chapter 11, which it has been in since Jan. 31.

The deal calls for current owner Carl Icahn to give up operational control and his 90 percent share of the company's stock to a new board of directors controlled by the company's creditors and including union representatives. Icahn is also expected to contribute between \$150-\$200 million of his own money to the airline.

Under the new arrangement, the creditors will gain 55 percent of TWA's stock in exchange for forgiving \$1 billion of the carrier's \$1.5 billion debt. The unions will gain 45 percent "ownership" of the airline in return for major wage and benefit concessions.

TWA's workers already gave important concessions in the name of saving the company in their latest contract, ratified only six months before. (See my article in the April 1992 issue of *Socialist Action*.)

Givebacks from the workers

This agreement includes a wage reduction of 11-15 percent, the loss of two paid holidays, an increase in the deductible for Major Medical from \$200 for individuals and \$400 for families to \$500 and \$1000 respectively, a reduction in overtime, and some other losses in benefits.

The raises due in 1993 and 1994 under the present contract, which the agreement amends, will be put back at least a year. A buy-out plan and other incentives for early retirement are being offered.

Even this may not be the end of givebacks, however. The agreement calls for quarterly review of TWA's financial situation by the new board of directors. If one of these "look back determinations" finds that savings that quarter are below a set figure, additional concessions can be imposed to make up the shortfall.

Thus, workers at TWA will be facing increasing economic hardships. Some of



TWA Flight Attendants in 1986. Today, lacking leadership, TWA workers accepted a reality that only they can change.

the reservationists and passenger service agents, just unionized with the latest contract, will earn less than when they were non-union. This review process will be both open-ended and outside the control of the workers. This amounts essentially to working without a contract, or rather with one that can be changed at will every three months.

This will be in addition to the effects of other cost-cutting measures by the company. On Aug. 26, TWA announced that its reservations office in New York City will be closed and 450 workers laid off. An expected contraction of the airline by 20 percent—through the elimination of unprofitable routes and sale of aircraft—is expected to result in the layoff of 3000 IAM members (some of these will be made

through retirements and those accepting the buyout plan).

A bankrupt union leadership

The IAM held ratification meetings for its members on Sept. 2, one day after TWA's management began implementing the terms of the agreement. This fact highlighted in the most grotesque way the complete bankruptcy of the union leadership. While billionaire Carl Icahn will get away scot-free, leaving the mess he created to the creditors, the billionaire creditors will make up for this by taking from the workers.

The union bureaucrats focussed on trying to sell their members on the idea that what was important was to "get rid of Carl" by paying out of their own pockets.

LTV steelworkers 'sold down the river' by union leadership

bankruptcy protection for six years.

The company was also aided by Steelworker international union officials. From Aug. 15-22, these officials travelled to various cities with LTV facilities to "explain" the tentative agreement. This explanation emphasized the pension improvements while downplaying the job losses and the benefit and work-rule concessions.

Written material distributed at these meetings—and mailed to all members with their ballots—boasted, "We won a contract that addresses our most pressing needs while preserving our right to engage in across-the-board bargaining on wages and other matters during the 1993-1994 round of negotiations."

This written material also played on the membership's fears. It stated: "If a majority of voting members turns down this settlement, the Company will return to the bankruptcy court and seek approval to reject our contract. As we have reported from the beginning, we expect the bankruptcy court to grant this request. Our only recourse then will be to carry out our promise to conduct an effective work stop-

page."

During the Aug. 17 contract explanation meeting in Cleveland, one steelworker asked if a "no" vote wouldn't simply allow the current agreement, which doesn't expire until August 1994, to remain in effect. This questioner added that he assumed both sides would then resume negotiations.

But Anthony Rainaldi, chairman of the negotiating committee, downplayed this possibility. He described a scenario in which the company received approval from the bankruptcy judge to void the current agreement and to unilaterally impose concessions. He then described a lengthy company lock-out followed by forced liquidation.

Not everyone accepted the international union's claim that this was the best possible agreement that could have been negotiated. Following brief welcoming remarks by District 28 Director Frank Valenta, Rainaldi asked the media to leave so steelworkers could conduct the business of the meeting in private. Retiree Joe Matovich, a former Local Union 2265 president, objected, demanding to know

This, in fact, was their entire strategy: Get the "bad" boss Icahn out and look around for a White Knight, a "good" boss who would infuse the needed cash into the airline to keep it afloat. That, of course, would require the carrier to be "cost-effective," which ultimately comes down to cheaper labor costs.

Meanwhile, the union tops will be colluding with the creditors in attracting a buyer through devaluing the labor of their own membership. Meanwhile, the stock ownership and board representation scheme will make the unions the supposed partners of the creditors as co-owners, and therefore jointly responsible for any future take-backs. This can only confuse and demoralize the rank-and-file workers.

The agreement was eventually approved by the union's membership despite a great deal of resentment and anger at the givebacks and the expectation of more to come.

On Sept. 11, the plan was approved by the bankruptcy court overseeing TWA's Chapter 11 status. It must still be approved by the Pension Benefits Guarantee Corp. (PBGC), which insures the company's pension fund. The PBGC claims that Icahn has underfunded the pension fund by \$1.2 billion.

The agreement at TWA, like similar concessionary deals being made across the country in many industries, is the product of three main factors:

1) The massive economic crisis capitalism is suffering today, which is driving company after company out of business and forcing the rest to sharply attack the living standards of their workers to keep up their rate of profit.

2) The bureaucratic, defeatist, and collaborationist attitudes of the leaderships of the labor unions, which have led to acceptance of concessions without a fight and defeats where fights were made.

3) The atomization and demoralization of the broad masses of workers resulting from the conditions created by the first two factors. This has held back the development of a real fighting leadership that could begin to turn things around.

Labor needs to relearn the lessons of solidarity and to begin putting our common interests as working brothers and sisters ahead of those of "our" companies.

Airline workers should demand that the federal government take some of the money it spends on "defense" and use it for the defense of union jobs by nationalizing bankrupt airlines like TWA as the first step toward nationalizing the whole industry. This should be under workers control; not some phony stock-owning scheme, but real decision-making control and management by those who actually make the industry run.

Only when the unions start acting like unions again can we avoid having things like the TWA deal foisted upon us. ■

By MARIE WEIGAND

On Sept. 4, 1992, a number of Steelworker local union officers gathered in Pittsburgh to count the mail ballots on the recently negotiated tentative labor agreement with LTV Steel. To no one's surprise, this concessionary agreement was approved overwhelmingly. The official vote count was 6503 to 1505, with slightly over 60 percent of the eligible voters returning ballots.

In June 1991, LTV gave the Steelworkers a list of demands for severe benefit cuts. In December, the company added demands to gut work rules. This spring, job losses and undermining retiree benefits were added to the list. Faced with a determined opposition by the union membership, LTV withdrew its worst demands. Most workers were so relieved that they were willing to accept minor concessions.

The company received help from the federal government in imposing this agreement.

On July 15, 1992, Federal Bankruptcy Judge Burton R. Lifland ordered attorneys for the company and union to reach an agreement, claiming they were facing a "meltdown" situation. He strongly implied that unless an agreement were reached that day, he would liquidate the company—which has been operating under Chapter 11

why the media "can't stay and hear how you sold us down the river." He stressed the 218 jobs that had been negotiated away, asking what type of union person could stand up and argue for a contract with such job losses.

Several of those attending this meeting sported T-shirts urging a no vote. Several Executive Board members from Indiana Harbor distributed a flier urging a "no" vote. Most questioners prefaced their remarks with reference to the "concessionary agreement." Rainaldi reacted angrily, stating, "It's not a concessionary agreement; it's an innovative agreement."

Actually, the concessions aren't even very innovative—job cuts, decreased medical benefits, a wage freeze, job combinations, and work rule changes.

Although the new agreement was overwhelmingly approved, most steelworkers reluctantly voted "yes," relieved that it wasn't worse and fearful of the consequences of a "no" vote. As more details become known, disapproval will grow.

Within days of the contract approval, on Sept. 16, LTV Steel signalled its continuing assault on steelworkers by announcing plans to shut down its Cleveland coke ovens by the end of the year. The company blamed "strict environmental regulations." This will cost another 300 jobs. ■

...Columbus Day

(continued from page 1)

Ridge Indian Reservation.

Serving two life terms, Peltier has continually proclaimed his innocence. This belief is also held by civil rights activists who have tried, unsuccessfully, to obtain a new trial on the grounds that Peltier was convicted on evidence manufactured by federal authorities.

Every year, month after month, suits are brought in both state and federal courts appealing unjust and treaty-breaking governmental actions. Protests, demonstrations, mass rallies, highway blockades, picket lines, and other acts of defiance take place continually in this country. Rarely are they reported in the press or televised on national news programs. Only in newspapers run by and for Indians does one find coverage of all the governmental anti-Indian actions and the resulting tribal responses.

The battles go on, the resistance continues. The court systems use the law to erode, diminish, and sometimes to end entirely the rights agreed upon historically—most often by treaty agreement.

No longer having the numerical strength of past history, Indians also turn to the legal system to protect and maintain these rights. Only too often, however, do they find again that the courts of justice in this land are, in truth, unjust. Court decisions sometimes interpret past laws with new arcane meanings and sometimes overturn past laws and agreements—as in the August 1992 New York State sales tax case. Or sometimes a favorable or just court decision is merely ignored by those agencies who should be enforcing the court decisions—as in the recent Oregon fishing rights case.

In New York, after the recent ruling by

the state Supreme Court Appellate Division, authorities are trying to collect fuel and cigarette taxes on New York state Indian reservations, in spite of treaties dating back to the 1700s prohibiting such tax collections. Of course, the Seneca, Iroquois, and other tribes and nations are refusing to cooperate. Holding that such tax collection is illegal, Indians are continuing to sell fuel and tobacco without collecting taxes.

In Oregon, state and federal agents, in joint action, are arresting Wanapam (Sohappy) Indians for fishing "illegally" in Columbia River waters. However, past treaties giving such rights were reaffirmed as recently as 1968, when the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in *Sohappy v. Smith* that the states of Oregon and Washington were prohibited from interfering with Indian fishing.

What is most damaging in the present

governmental anti-Indian "legal" assaults is probably the conflict over Indian gaming. First of all, it is a concerted action in many states affecting much more than merely the reservations located within one state. Consequently, it affects many, many more Indians. Secondly, and more important, is that the potential loss of funds will decrease present benefits to Native Americans—as well as future funding, which would provide tremendous benefits to many tribes.

Indians casinos are raided

The issue is one of tribal sovereignty. The federal law passed by Congress in 1988 permits Indian tribes to offer gambling upon their lands provided it is the same type of gaming permitted by the state elsewhere. In addition, the act requires state authorities to negotiate with the Indians

concerned in "good faith."

But there's the rub. Just as the vague term "good faith" is open to all sorts of interpretations, so too are other problems of definition within the act. And when state/Indian accord is not reached, and no pact results, then the 1950s Johnson Act—which prohibits gambling on Indian reservations—takes over and the federal agents raid Indian casinos for violation of that act.

The result of all these conflicts has been state and federal raids upon casinos, confiscation of machines and gambling equipment, prohibiting of gaming of similar nature but different names (i.e. bingo vs. keno), and seizure of property at gunpoint with "cops for rent" accompanying the FBI SWAT teams.

But, perhaps the most amazing—and potentially the most fearsome—story is the recent Associated Press release datelined: "SEATTLE (AP) 7/2/92," which stated that "the Bush administration has quietly asserted that it has the power to declare any Indian tribe in the nation extinct," even if the tribe has been recognized by a congressionally-ratified treaty.

This policy, reported in the *Seattle Post Intelligencer*, was buried in a Bureau of Indian Affairs decision barring recognition to the Miami tribe of Indians. The Department of Interior later acknowledged that the Bush administration has asserted its power to declare any tribe extinct, although American governmental policy in the past has been that only Congress has had the right to such determination.

Of course, this evil and potentially catastrophic policy has been protested by the Miamis and will, no doubt, be the subject of much more protest by various organizations of American Indians in the near future. The resistance continues. ■

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PEDRO LUIS RAOTA

Protests set for Columbus Day celebrations in S.F.

By PAUL COLVIN

San Francisco has been designated the country's official Columbus Quincentennial jubilee city.

If past "celebrations" of this event are any indication, the official ceremonies will continue to lionize Columbus, while depreciating the cultures of the Native American peoples that Columbus and his descendants attempted to destroy.

But the voice of Native Americans has not been stilled. At the same time as the official Columbus ceremonies, American Indians and other oppressed peoples have called for counter-demonstrations commemorating "500 years of resistance to genocide, colonialism, and political internment."

Events in San Francisco include an Oct. 1-4 International Tribunal of Indigenous Peoples and Oppressed Nations (at Mission High School, 18th and Dolores Streets). On Oct. 11, a mass march will take place, beginning at 12 p.m. at Fort Mason and ending at the Civic Center for a 1 p.m. rally.

These events are being sponsored by a coalition of 28 organizations, including gay and lesbian groups; environmental groups; and Puerto Rican, Mexican, and African American groups.

I asked a few of the activists who are organizing the International Tribunal to explain their goals to the readers of *Socialist Action*.

Alejandro Molina, of the Movimiento de Liberación Nacional Puertorriqueño, told me that the tribunal's main session will be centered around three major themes—genocide, human rights violations, and political prisoners. An international panel of noted jurists will sit in judgment of the United States government on these issues.

"There's an indictment being prepared," said Molina. "We'll be serving it to William Barr, the attorney general of the United States. And there will be an opportunity for them to respond, if they so desire, at the tribunal."

Molina told me that the coalition backing the tribunal was founded on three principal points of unity.

"The first one," he said, "is to conceive of 1992 as a time to destroy the Columbian myth, especially for oppressed peoples within the United States. More

specifically, to destroy the legacy of Columbus—including social and cultural values—which the U.S. government is obviously interested in perpetuating."

"That is the culture of white supremacy," he said, "along with the political and economic system that began in 1492 in the invasion of Columbus. The system was imposed that said: 'We are better in every sense of the word,' and it has continued unabated for 500 years."

The second point, Molina said, is to talk about the right of self-determination of oppressed peoples within an international context. Because of recent international events, he pointed out, "people in the United States are

convicted of seditious conspiracy to overthrow the authority of the U.S. government in Puerto Rico and received sentences of anywhere from 55 years to life.

"The third point," Molina said, "is to make the link-up between self-determination and the history of resistance that we've had for the past 500 years."

"This is embodied," Molina continued, "in the legacies of Harriet Tubman, Nat Turner, and General Gabriel Prosser. In Puerto Rico you had the Indians who resisted—all the way up to Albizu Campos, the Nationalist Party, Lolita Lebrón. In the Native American movement, there was Chief Sitting Bull, Geronimo and, up to the present, Leonard Peltier."

Bobby Castillo, a member of the council of the American Indian Movement (AIM) and international spokesperson for Leonard Peltier, told me that the tribunal and AIM will be submitting documentation of all 371 treaties that the U.S. government signed and violated with the Indians.

"Because they have violated these agreements with us," Castillo said, "we are nullifying all the agreements. ... We want to sign a new pact, to reach a peaceful agreement and accord for the next 500 years. We cannot live under a society that exports war, that exploits minerals, the trees, the water, and the people."

"We are looking for a system that would be more based on socialism than any other system—which was the system that indigenous peoples have always lived under."

Ahmed Obafemi, of the New African People's Organization, told me that the tribunal was born in 1990 in New York. An international tribunal was held at that time that focussed on the question of political prisoners. Jurors from Europe and Africa participated in the event, which the organizers thought was a great success.

"After that tribunal in 1990," Obafemi said, "the issue came up around the Quincentennial, and the Native Americans sat down with us. We tried to continue the coalition work we were doing. To us, really, the Emancipation Proclamation was similar to the many treaties that have been broken by the United States government with the indigenous people."

"The United States paints itself as the defender of human rights on a world scale. But on the other hand, it refuses to acknowledge that there's a broad spectrum of political prisoners here..."

being exposed as never before, in the newspapers, to terms like self-determination and political prisoners."

Molina continued, "The United States paints itself as the defender of human rights on a world scale. But on the other hand, it refuses to acknowledge that there's a broad spectrum of political prisoners here. The charges range from frame-ups—as in the cases of Native American political prisoner Leonard Peltier and [Black Panther member] Geronimo Pratt—to the Plowshares prisoners (pacifist Catholics who served six months to 18 years), to the Puerto Rican Independistas, who were

...Rap music

(continued from page 20)

and sung about an uprising like that one. Even more, it had announced a revolution.

"Marketing the revolution" was, from the beginning, the goal of the artistic activity of Public Enemy. This was recently revealed by the group's first producer, Bill Stephney. To guarantee that the revolution is televised before it erupts, is one of Public Enemy's explicit steps. Conscious of the dramatic lack of political leadership in the Black community, it wants to contribute to the development of many millions of Black militants. The group is also capable of developing some white militants, James Bernard affirms.

"Sister Souljah for president"

After the Los Angeles uprising, the U.S. ruling class took the message of rap seriously. And here we have the third cause, which the editors of *The Source* describe as the attempt to smash the hip-hop counter-culture of Black and Hispanic youth, as well as, further down the line, white youth themselves.

Sister Souljah was little known as a rapper. A social worker in poor neighborhoods and a brilliant campus orator, she was recently discovered and promoted by Public Enemy. Chuck D—himself considered by some to be the Malcolm X of hip-hop culture—was persuaded that the culture also needed its Angela Davis.

The first album registered by Sister Souljah, "360 Degrees of Power," reveals a strong militant nationalist who implacably denounces white supremacy and imperialist domination of the Third World. At the same time, she preaches Black empowerment within the economic, cultural, and

provoked a riot.

This founder of the style known as "West Coast gansta rap" has succeeded in enlarging his audience to white youth. That's the reason why in his latest album, made with the heavy-metal band Body Count, he performs hard rock.

And the fact that the audience for this album is largely white also explains the hysterical reaction of the police, members of Congress, and George Bush to the lyrics. Through the rap milieu, some white hard rock musicians—Metallica, Megadeth, and others—expressed their solidarity with Ice-T.

In Lollapalooza, a travelling festival in 33 cities, Ice-T was made master of ceremonies. While announcing the groups, he took the time to shoot down those who wished to reduce artists and musicians to silence.

A former member of a gang in Los Angeles, Ice-T began his spectacular artistic career rapping about the gangs in the film "Colors" by Dennis Hopper. This film revealed to the public the reality of the "urban war" of the poor section of South-Central L.A.

Ice-T often used his rap to combat the gang war conducted by the Crips and the Bloods—and to make peace among them. It was necessary, he rapped, to end the suicide and to be conscious of the fact that a real common enemy existed that needed combatting—the police, FBI, and CIA, as well as the social-economic system that is a prison for human beings.

After the uprising, Ice-T expressed the hope to *Rolling Stone* that "Black people realize it's more a poverty-versus-money thing than a Black-white thing." He thought that "the shit would be on until we got to the White House."



political spheres. She appears as a soldier of an army she has called to be formed.

"With the Clinton situation now, she's definitely throwing bombs. And that's her role," comments Chuck D.

The unforeseen promotion of the young rapper—by means of the polemics between her and the Democratic candidate—is having even more unexpected consequences. *The Source* headlines its cover: "Sister Souljah for president?"

Meanwhile, Ice-T proposes her for a vice presidential candidate, if the rappers decide to present a Black independent slate one day. When such a slate is put forward, he says, with Ice Cube and Sister Souljah at its head—accompanied by Chuck D, KRS-One, and himself—it will really be possible to obtain millions of votes.

Ice-T and gangsta rap

Contrary to Sister Souljah, Ice-T is one of the most prominent rappers in the public eye. Occasionally, he is also a movie actor. In "New Jack City" by Mario Van Peebles, he played a Black undercover cop, which brought him good reviews from his fans, while the film was accused of having

It's evident that with other rappers, who are the heart of the Stop the Violence Movement, Ice-T made a major contribution to the truce begun by the Crips and the Bloods just before the uprising and to the fraternization initiatives during and after it. Recently, a coalition of gang leaders elaborated a common program of immediate demands for the development of the poor neighborhoods of Los Angeles. This was made public in the magazine *The Nation*.

In an interview aired on KPFK in Los Angeles and other Pacifica radio stations, some gang members affirmed that the Crips and Bloods were discussing among their projects the formation of an independent radical party, looking to overturn the white supremacist system and the power of big business.

"Will we get justice?"

In interviews in the magazines *Rolling Stone* and *Spin* on the subject of the "Cop Killer" affair, Ice-T explains that the police in America have a large body of angry killers in their midst who are out of control and never punished for their crimes. That's

Black students victims of racist dragnet at upstate N.Y. college

By GERRY FIORI

The institutionalized racism of American society was demonstrated once again last month in the small college town of Oneonta in upstate New York.

On Sept. 4, a 77-year old woman reported being attacked by a man attempting to burglarize her house. The woman received superficial stab wounds with a knife. She identified her assailant only as a Black man, and stated she was certain he had cut his hand during the attack.

Based on this vague evidence, the state police and local sheriff's department put out an alert for a "college-age" Black male with a cut hand or wrist, without giving any further description. They then proceeded to initiate a full-scale campaign of harassment of local Blacks.

H. Karl Chandler, the senior state police investigator, was quoted in a local paper as saying, "We've tried to examine the hands of all Black people in the community."

At State University of New York College at Oneonta, campus officials provided police with a list of all Black males enrolled at the college. The cops then conducted a dorm-by-dorm search in search of their ill-defined suspect.

These actions provoked outrage among students at the college. Several demonstrations, one 500 strong, were held to protest the cops' violation of the civil rights of the Black students and the

racism underlying it. As one of the students put it, "You don't see them questioning every white man every time somebody commits a crime".

The Third World Association, which represents Blacks and people of other oppressed nationalities on campus, has threatened to take legal action. The campus administration eventually was forced to issue a formal apology for its role in the affair.

This incident is reminiscent, on a smaller scale, of the infamous Charles Stuart case in Boston a few years ago. In that case Stuart, who was white, killed his wife and wounded himself, then claimed to police that a Black man had attacked them both. The Boston cops then instituted a virtual state of martial law in the city's Black neighborhoods for several months before Stuart's hoax was discovered. Two Black men, Al Swanson and William Bennett, were almost railroaded by a police department looking for a convenient suspect.

Oneonta is just another example of what any Black person in Boston, South-Central Los Angeles, or Harlem could tell you: To the ruling class and its agents, Black people are the enemy and the cops are an army of occupation in hostile territory. It also is another demonstration of how Black control of their own communities must be an essential part of their struggle against racism and for self-determination. ■

"Ice-T often used his rap to combat the gang war conducted by the Crips and the Bloods—and to make peace among them. It was necessary, he rapped, to end the suicide and to be conscious of the fact that a real common enemy existed that needed combatting—the police, FBI, and CIA, as well as the social-economic system that is a prison for human beings."

the reason, he says, why he often tests the desire to take a fling and kill some of those killer cops. He knows that many Blacks and youth have that desire, and "I have the right to say how I feel."

Besides, an artist has the duty to warn society, Ice-T declares. And he does it quite distinctly: "I totally predict that if we don't listen, people are going to move to bloodshed. I know from listening to the homeys and the people in the street, if they do not see justice, then they are going to move, and this time it's going to be on more than inanimate objects. They're going to hurt some people."

"So are we going to get some justice? Are you going to send some of these killer cops to jail, show people that everybody is responsible under the law? Or are you going to show them that the law doesn't work? And in that case, why should they respect any of the laws?"

But Ice-T doesn't consider "Cop Killer" merely as a warning. This song has, in his eyes, a significance much more profound. It is a revolutionary song, he explains:

"This country was founded on the things I talk about. I learned it in school. Paul Revere was running around saying, 'Here come the pigs, and a fuckup is going

down.' We had a revolution. ... That was a revolutionary thought, and those were very honorable thoughts in those days.

"We just celebrated July 4th, which is really just national Fuck the Police Day. And 'The Star Spangled Banner' is a song about a hell of a shootout with the police. You can call them troops, whatever you want, but basically they're police from the other side.

"I'll bet back during the Revolutionary War, there were songs similar to mine. If you want to look at it, I guess the cop killer is the first soldier in the war who decides, 'Hey, it's time to go out there and be aggressive, and I'm moving against them.'

"This country is based on war and revolution. Now to hear a revolutionary song like 'Cop Killer' coming from the cities, where they know there are people ready to get going, they want to shut it down real quick. ... Cops are here to serve and protect, but they're also here to control, and not let shit get too out of hand. They don't want another revolution, so they want to shut down these thought patterns."

"Cop Killer" was withdrawn from sale in the United States and throughout the world. But Ice-T has announced that he'll continue to sing it in his concerts. ■

...Elections '92

(continued from page 1)

anger of working people—and specifically at the phenomenon of skyrocketing taxes.

Both parties had been shifting the tax burden from the very rich to working people for years. Sales taxes and value-added taxes on such things as liquor, gasoline, and cigarettes (all of which are flat taxes, hitting the poorest the hardest) were steadily raised. And as larger and larger income tax-bites were withheld from paychecks, growls of discontent grew louder.

Seeking to subvert this discontent to its own class needs, the capitalist news media began to link the cause of rising taxes to social welfare programs. Periodically, there appeared "exposés" of "welfare queens," more often than not identified as Blacks or Latinos—some of whom, it was alleged, drove downtown in Cadillacs to pick up their welfare checks. Such reports served to make a racist connection between high taxes, welfare costs, and the Black "welfare cheats."

Welfare for the rich

At the same time, the media rationalized welfare for the rich. The far more massive expenditures on war and the vast government handouts to bail-out bankrupt industries and banks were held to be sacrosanct and beyond criticism.

Republican demagogues like Ronald Reagan soon became identified as the most consistently aggressive exponents of an ongoing campaign to "reform" the "tax and spend" policy, which was linked by Reagan and other Republican leaders to the Democrats, even though the so-called "tax and spend" policy was almost always supported by a majority of both parties.

The fact is that the policy of tax and spend was mainly a mechanism for regulating the economy so as to avoid alternating bouts of recession and inflation—or at least to flatten out the low and high points of the cycles. These policies were never instituted in order to serve the good and welfare of the great majority of working-class Americans.

The amalgamation of high taxes, welfare, and "welfare cheats" served the Republicans to chop a chunk of the better paid worker and middle-class voters away from the Democrats. Soon most Democrats in and out of government hopped aboard the anti-"tax and spend" bandwagon.

But behind the campaign against "tax and spend" and the new reluctance to use deficit financing to give a boost to a slumping economy, is the huge budget deficit and the national debt, which limits further deficit financing to spur the failing economy. This is because such a policy now risks triggering hyper-inflation—no less a threat to capitalist stability than is a sharp economic decline and a massive increase in unemployment.

American capitalism's crucial need was and is to reduce taxes on the rich by raising the taxes of everyone else. This is what caused the whole political spectrum of capitalist politics to shift steadily to the right.

This is the way it has worked: With each election, unkept promises by the Democratic Party "liberals" have permitted the Republican Party "conservatives" to move ever rightward, dragging in their tow the more affluent, but discontented voters, who had traditionally voted Democrat.

Then in each subsequent election, as the bad guys saw their way to become bolder and fiercer fighters for the rich and against the poor, the "good guys" could move more openly in the same direction and still give the appearance of resisting pro-business, anti-labor policies.

The result has been that Democrats need pretend less—and promise less. The scarcity of Democrats accepting the label "liberal" or "pro-labor," nowadays, testifies to the decline of practicing "liberals."

While this swindle may not have been planned, it has been seized upon by all wings of the capitalist class and now functions as a brazen and crude confidence game.

But it would be a mistake to wring our hands in despair over its having gone on for so long without the "suckers" learning very obvious lessons.



"In desperation, they must resort to arguments like, 'We have no choice but to hold our noses and vote for Clinton because its the only way to stop Bush.' Or as one political columnist put it: The choice is between Mr. Bush and Mr. Not Bush."

To the contrary, it wasn't long before it became ever-more apparent that tax and spending cuts (tax cuts for the rich and spending cuts for the poor) hurt the poorest workers and benefited only the rich. Now the illusion of lesser evilism is at its lowest in years.

But major shifts in consciousness (drawing the appropriate conclusions from this Republican-Democratic Party shell game) don't come little by little. The meaning of these developments accumulates in people's heads, until quantity changes into quality—and what physicists call a "phase change" takes place.¹

Evidence of changing consciousness has for some time been expressed by the growing rate of those abstaining from voting. This was demonstrated recently by the unprecedented mass response to Ross Perot.

Many disgusted voters, who may not have illusions that this multi-billionaire represents a real alternative, nevertheless see his candidacy providing another way of expressing opposition to both major parties.

It was earlier evidenced by Jesse Jackson's Rainbow demagoguery, which many demoralized socialists and ex-socialists argued pointed to a break from capitalist politics. More recently, one of his lieutenants, Ron Daniels, appears to be keeping open Jackson's option of forming a "radical" third capitalist party based on the middle class. Daniels has announced his "independent" candidacy for U.S. president and will appear on the California ballot as the candidate of the Peace and Freedom Party.

The third capitalist party option is also evidenced by the 21st Century Party, which had its founding meeting on Aug. 29-30 in Washington, D.C. This middle-class formation, sponsored more broadly than the Ron Daniels effort by pro-Democratic Party leaders of the National Organization for Women (NOW) and other liberal feminists, has revealed its real intentions in a declaration in the August *National Now Times*: "Membership in the 21st Century Party does not preclude members and participants from helping candidates of other parties who support feminist issues." It's hardly a secret that this means the Democrats.

A similar declaration had been adopted by Ron Daniels's People's Progressive Convention, at its Aug. 21-23 gathering in Ypsilanti, Mich.

Holding their noses for Clinton

But even though the evidence suggests imminent big changes in mass political

consciousness, it is not possible to predict how far down the road a real break, by workers, from the two capitalist parties will take place. But take place it will. The deepening economic crisis afflicting world capitalism seems to be on the verge of tumbling out of control. When it does, an acceleration in the pace of changing consciousness is certain.

Despite the evidence of changing consciousness, however, labor bureaucrats have hitched their wagon to the most openly conservative and anti-labor Democratic presidential candidate in 60 years.

A variety of burned-out ex-socialists has been recruited to the bureaucracy's motley crew of rank opportunists, to help them rationalize their bankrupt pro-capitalist policy. This is because the bureaucrats are finding it harder than ever to get workers to swallow the likes of Bill Clinton.

In desperation, they must resort to arguments like, "We have no choice but to hold our noses and vote for Clinton because its the only way to stop Bush." Or as one political columnist put it: The choice is between Mr. Bush and Mr. Not Bush.

They are driven down to this level of crass political fakery because few can take seriously the claim that this "good" Democrat will do more for labor than would George Bush.

After all, Bill Clinton has comfortably served as governor of the "right-to-work" state of Arkansas. He has not lifted a finger to give back to workers rights taken away by what the AFL-CIO had once called "slave labor laws."

Arkansas is likewise the only state without a civil rights law. Gov. Clinton is for restrictions on the right to abortion. He is an advocate of the death penalty, an opponent of welfare, and an advocate of "workfare"—which is nothing but a scheme for rationalizing and driving the victims of capitalist unemployment off welfare and a vote-getting signal to racist whites.

Clinton's stance on foreign policy is virtually identical with that of Bush. If anything, when Clinton attempts to differentiate himself from the Republicans, he appears to be even more of a hawk than Bush.

While endorsing the government's recent war moves against Iraq, for example, Clinton chastized Bush for not doing enough to "defy and defeat those who threaten us." Clinton is also a strong opponent of the Cuban Revolution; he gave his endorsement to a bill tightening the blockade against Cuba, which was passed by the House last month.

Those in the Democratic Party who claim to be champions of workers, Blacks, or women's rights are having a hard time keeping up the pretense. In this period, so-called "progressive" politicians, like demagogues such as Congressman (and self-proclaimed "socialist") Ron Dellums, see the shine rubbing off their "progressive" images to the extent that they attempt to palm-off the Democratic Party presidential candidate as a friend of the oppressed.

Rainbow-Democrat Jesse Jackson, for instance, was visibly uncomfortable last month when called on by his party to sit alongside Clinton for campaign photo-ops intended to garner Black votes.

Truly, in this election, the situation foisted on working people of voting for the "lesser evil" or not voting at all has been raised to the theatre of the absurd.

"Partners" with the bosses?

The most glaring void in this year's elections is the absence of a working class alternative to Bush and Clinton.

Socialist Action's efforts to drive home the central importance of the principle of working-class political independence is based on the simple fact that the class interests of workers and bosses are diametrically opposed.

In a nutshell, when sectors of the workers' movement make the mistake of granting political support to any wing of the capitalist class, it inevitably has the effect of grossly miseducating the working class and results in ever-bigger mistakes, setbacks, and defeats.

But class collaboration didn't begin on the electoral level. It begins inside the workers' economic institutions arising from the class struggle—the unions. So long as the bosses can prevent unionization of the workplace, they do so. But once compelled to recognize the union, they set to work to bribe and otherwise corrupt the most backward elements and form them into instruments of control over the workers' organizations.

In periods of sharp class struggle, however, the more militant and more conscious elements tend to emerge as leaders. In such periods, worker leaders are usually selected from among the best fighters, from those who have shown their leadership by getting into the thick of combat and taking all the attendant risks.

However, this is not the case in periods of relative calm. The most conservative elements tend to find their way into the full-time paid positions—just like the froth that rises to coat the surface of a stagnant pond.

They are, as a general rule, a different breed. Their prime motive is not to improve the workers' lot but to get themselves off the production line and behind a desk with a steady job. Their outlook tends to be one of establishing peaceful relations between union and employer, and to avoid trouble. They become simple job-holders; i.e., bureaucrats, and are easily manipulated by the bosses.

The labor bureaucracy—especially those in commanding positions at the tops of unions—see themselves in a partnership with the bosses. They tend to see themselves as moderators of the daily struggle between workers and bosses. They reason it to be in the interests of everyone to keep production going smoothly so that both workers and bosses have a "pie" to divide each week.

They interpose themselves between bosses and workers, blocking the latter from fighting back. They reason, further, that profits must be kept high enough to keep the employers from closing down or moving their plants to an area in this country or abroad where wages are low enough to realize a "reasonable profit."

This logic adds up to the modus operandi of the class collaborationists: *Workers needs must be subordinate to profits!*

The labor movement's political alliance with the Democratic Party is merely the extension of this "partnership" relationship from the workplace into the sphere of politics; that is the arena of *generalized economic struggle*.

Political and economic class collaboration are just two sides of the same coin.

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And as a general rule, you can't do one without the other.

Thus in this period of sharpening capitalist war against the working class, the labor bureaucracy has been openly blocking a fightback and is the direct cause of the current worker disorientation and demoralization.

Where to begin?

As you can see, there is no contradiction between the task of raising the level of class consciousness on the economic and political planes. And we begin wherever we can, wherever opportunities present themselves.

So now the 1992 election is before us. How and where do we begin? Revolutionary Marxists have been advocates of the formation of a mass revolutionary workers' political party from the first. We have long advocated a labor party based on the unions as a step in that direction. And we raise the idea in an educational way whenever appropriate—especially when elections are before us.

But at this point, workers do not have such a choice—there is no mass workers' party. In such a case Socialist Action would, if it could, have fielded its own candidates in this election, as we have done in past local elections. SA would thereby set the example of independent working class political action. This would also permit us to advance our political program in a way not possible at other times.

Unfortunately, in SA's nine-year existence, we have not yet become strong enough to field a Socialist Action presidential slate.

Vote socialist in 1992!

But fortunately, working people can register their opposition to capitalism and its political representatives by casting a vote, wherever possible, for the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) candidates—James Warren for president and Estelle De Bates for vice-president.

By the end of September, the SWP campaign had completed petitioning for ballot status in 21 states, and the candidates had already been approved to appear on the ballot in 11 states and the District of Columbia.

Several states were challenging ballot status for the SWP candidates—a typical example of capitalist harassment of working-class electoral efforts.

Even though we have serious disagreements with the program of the SWP, we both agree on one very important principle—that of independent working-class political action. We view the SWP's independent socialist election campaign as an expression of this principle in the United States.

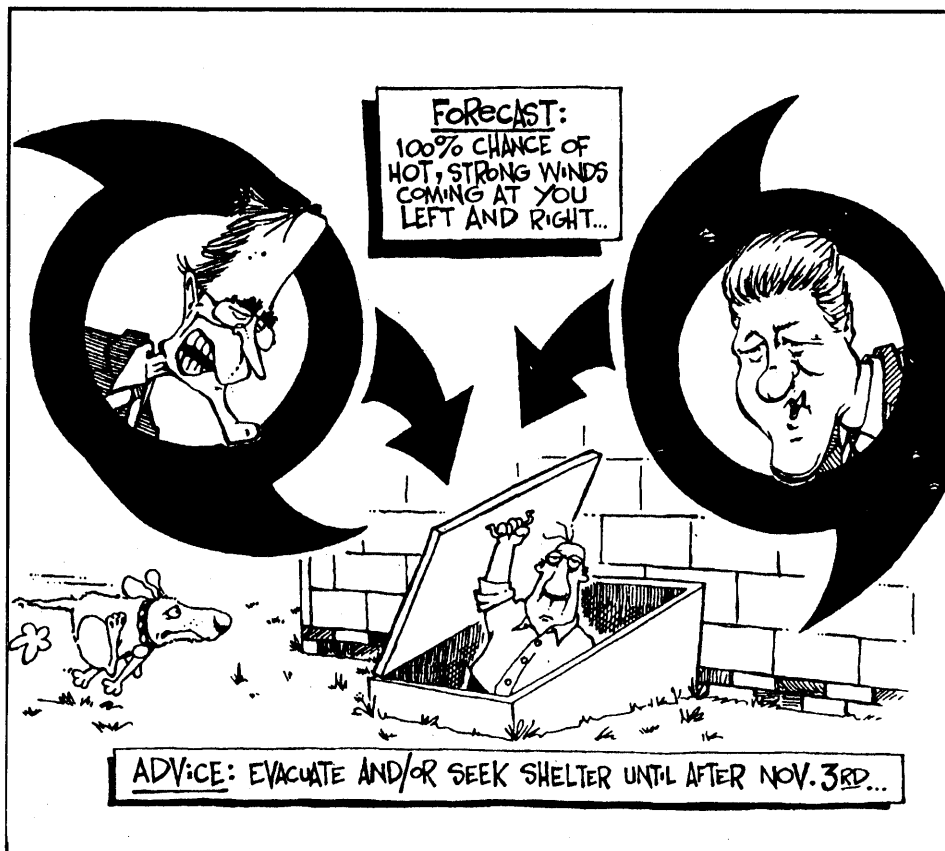
That alone makes it possible for us to take the tactical decision of granting the SWP critical support, and thereby helping to advance the principle of independent class political action in this election.

But our support cannot be granted without criticism. While we unreservedly urge our readers to vote for the SWP slate, we also have the responsibility to our readers of laying out where we think the SWP's current program is wanting—and where it conflicts with class independence.

One of our most important concerns is in regard to the position the SWP has taken toward the South African revolution. The SWP's position here and in other places in the world casts a cloud over their commitment to the principle of working-class independence.

The SWP supports the class collaborationist strategy of the South African Communist Party (SACP) and the African National Congress (ANC). This is a break not only from the principle of class independence but also from the Theory of Permanent Revolution, which we had held in common up until the early 1980s—shortly before the founders of Socialist Action were undemocratically expelled from the SWP.

The Theory of Permanent Revolution,



first developed by Leon Trotsky in 1905-06, holds that the democratic revolution—which in South Africa includes central tasks such as providing equal rights for the Black majority—can only be fulfilled when the working class takes power in its own name and undertakes a socialist revolution.

But the SACP/ANC strategic goal includes sharing power with the white rulers and respecting capitalist property rights for an indeterminate historical period. We reject that as antithetical to the effectiveness of the Black freedom struggle.

This programmatic and governmental

alliance commits all components of the alliance to a struggle that does not transgress capitalist limits.

It means that Black South African workers are barred from mobilizing around working-class economic and political issues—mobilizations which could set off the only dynamic that can lead toward the overthrow of the white capitalist social and political dictatorship.

Economic demands such as the fight to reduce the workweek from 50 hours to 40 hours with no reduction in pay, and escalator clauses pegging wages to rising prices, are subverted by the attempts of the ANC



**“But fortunately, working people can register their opposition to capitalism and its political representatives by casting a vote, wherever possible, for the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) candidates—
James Warren for president and Estelle De Bates for vice-president.”**

to form an “interim government” together with the white supremacist regime.

Moreover, the SACP/ANC's alliance with white capitalists rules out any perspective that includes winning white workers over to the Black majority's struggle for freedom and democracy; it rules out combining the workers' revolution with the democratic revolution.

This also means that the SWP has broken with another central programmatic position we had once held in common as revolutionary Marxists—the Transitional Program, which strategically links together democratic and anti-capitalist transitional demands.

Positions of support to class collaboration in South Africa, and opposition to it in the United States are mutually exclusive. For scientific socialists (and the SWP still claims this designation) theoretical consistency is at the heart of the scientific method.

Drift from class-struggle strategy

Reflecting their departure from the principle of class independence in South Africa and other countries, the SWP has been subtly drifting away from a class-struggle strategy in this country as well.

Over the last few years, reports on labor struggles carried in *The Militant*, the SWP's weekly newspaper, (with a single rare exception) have not made the slightest criticism of the official AFL-CIO policy of abiding by court injunctions that take away the right to picket effectively in strikes—even when scabs are pouring through plant gates.

The most important of these defeats resulted from the strike by members of the International Association of Machinists (IAM) against Eastern Airlines. In this strike, as in virtually every defeated strike in recent years, the labor bureaucracy meekly abided by injunctions limiting strikers to handfuls of pickets at each entrance.

(Token isolated demonstrations involving as many as a few hundred workers were allowed but without any attempt to bar scabs.)

In the case of the IAM, the top officialdom focused its sights, not on winning its demands, but on ousting the corporate raider, Frank Lorenzo, from control over Eastern Airlines.

One of the purposes of this demand became apparent at the end of the strike when Lorenzo was indeed ousted by Eastern's stockholders. The IAM bureaucrats declared this to be a victory—while Eastern workers were left empty-handed and jobless. *The Militant* concurred that the ouster of Frank Lorenzo was a victory.

Another purpose of the IAM's focus on removing Lorenzo flowed from their hopes for winning the aid and support of “friendly” capitalists, like corporate raider Carl Icahn. The IAM bureaucracy, at the time, strongly hinted that if someone like him would take over Eastern, more concessions would be granted by the union to make the company more profitable.

Furthermore, the SWP had as recently as its last presidential election campaign four years ago promoted a break by labor from capitalist politics. They, too, had explained the need for an independent party of labor based on the unions. But in the current campaign the SWP has dropped this slogan.

The SWP's failure to draw the lessons of the labor bureaucracy's capitulation to capital in both the economic and political spheres of the class struggle clouds their message of class independence.

Nevertheless, SWP campaign literature points out that both of the two capitalist parties are leading the economic assault against working people. Therefore, by running their own candidates, the SWP campaign serves the cause of working-class independence.

Vote socialist! Vote for James Warren for U.S. president and Estelle DeBates for vice-president! Protest attempts by the ruling class to rule the SWP's candidates off the ballot!

¹Phase-change: as in H₂O; water, vapor, ice.

New pamphlet analyzes dynamics of African American struggle for justice

Because of the imminent release of Spike Lee's new movie on the life of Malcolm X, we are printing below the introduction to a new Socialist Action pamphlet titled, "The Coming Black Rebellion and the Legacy of Malcolm X." The introduction was written by Kwame M.A. Somburu, who worked with Malcolm X during the last year of his life.

By KWAME SOMBURU

During the early 1960s, I became actively involved in political, economic, and cultural issues relating to Africa and African Americans. This included my participation in the Organization of Afro-American Unity (OAAU)—founded by Malcolm X in 1964. I attended almost every meeting of the OAAU in the Audubon Ballroom—where he was later assassinated—and other places.

Malcolm's speeches contributed much to my understanding of the centuries-long struggle of my people for Black liberation and self-determination.

Malcolm X was the leading advocate of the most progressive Black nationalism ever to be advanced in this country. Malcolm's Black nationalism was unique. It was inherently class conscious—that is, while it was attuned to the consciousness of Black Americans as a whole, it was most sensitive to the concrete situation of the Black working class concentrated in the ghettos of America's large cities.

Malcolm's Black nationalism, moreover, was internationalist—that is, it advanced the unity of Blacks with all victims of exploitation and oppression in the fight for liberation and self-determination in this country and in the world.

To me and many others, the OAAU was the most promising of many organizational and programmatic attempts by African Americans to defeat the varying types of mental, economic, physical, and cultural enslavement that we have been subjected to.

I have personally participated in efforts—before and after the OAAU—to get independent Black political movements going. These included helping to build such groups as the Harlem chapter of the Freedom Now Party, Afro-Americans Against the War in Vietnam, and the National Black Independent Political Party. And I believe that such an independent Black movement, relevant to the 1990's, is needed now more than ever.

Since 1960, I saw myself as a Black nationalist, socialist, and internationalist. These are not contradictory conceptions, as you will better see after reading this pamphlet.

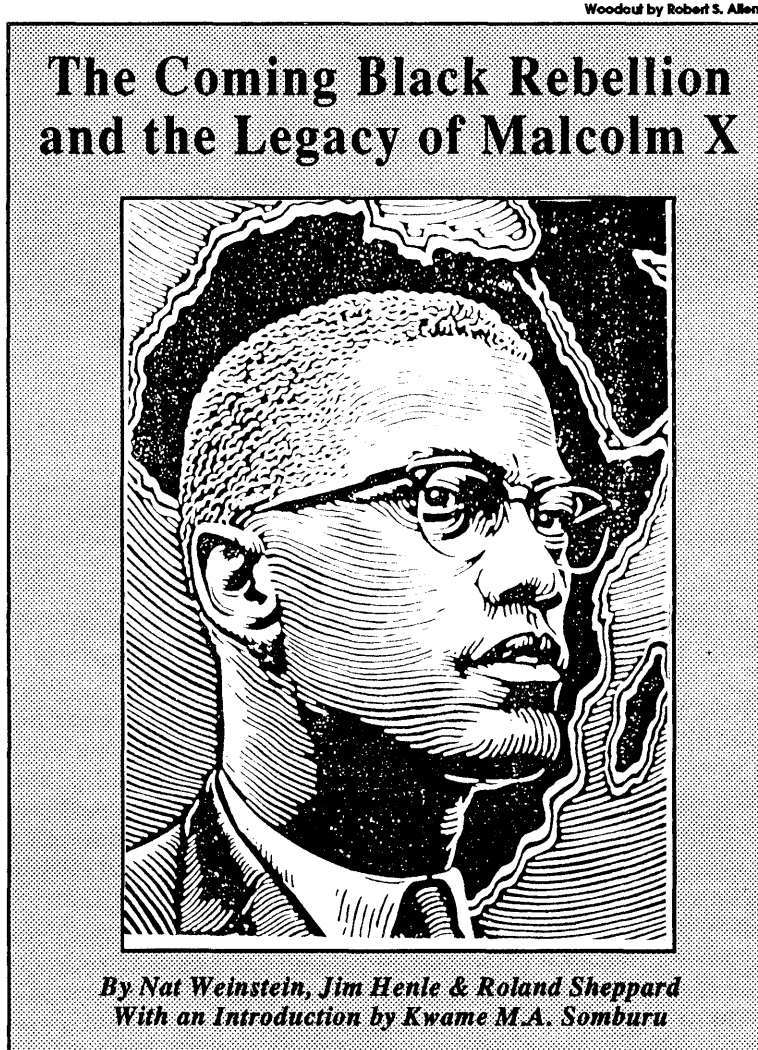
That's why besides participating in building independent Black movements, I have been a socialist since 1965 and a member of Socialist Action (SA) since 1984. I consider the following ideas, advanced on this subject by my party, to be a unique and vital contribution to the Black liberation movement in America.

Malcolm X's unique contribution

To best understand the contents of this pamphlet, we must look back to 1963, when Malcolm X commented to the news media in the aftermath of U.S. President John F. Kennedy's assassination, that "the chickens have come home to roost." This simple statement of fact cut across the myth, widespread even then, that this political representative of the rich and powerful, John F. Kennedy, was a friend of Blacks, of workers, of all the downtrodden and disadvantaged members of society.

Having served less than three years of his term, President Kennedy's hands were already stained with the blood of tens of thousands of poor Vietnamese peasants and other colonial peoples who dared to fight for freedom and independence.

Malcolm's trampling over the Kennedy myth aroused the white capitalist rulers of America to an apoplectic fury. They had already taken notice of his phenomenal rise



from nowhere to mobilize masses to enter the struggle for Black liberation in the Northern ghettos; they had good reason to fear him. Malcolm's campaign against the cynical *de facto* racism of Northern "liberals" had the effect of extending the Southern struggle against "Jim Crow" laws to the rest of the country.

Racist capitalism had already given backhanded credit to Malcolm by having organized a slander campaign in the mass media against the man they called the outstanding exponent of hate—a "racist in reverse." But after Malcolm trashed the Kennedy myth, the ruling class—through their monopoly over the mass media—agitated for his head on a platter.

Malcolm X had earned the enmity of white rulers as the Nation of Islam's most effective champion of its Black nationalist strategy for winning liberation for Black America. Malcolm X had begun a remarkable transformation of the "Black Muslims," as they were then widely known, from a small religious sect into a burgeoning and promising revolutionary force for Black liberation.

He had shown an unmatched ability to capture the simmering anger and rebellious mood of the Black masses in the ghettos of Northern cities. In just a few short years, he became their most effective spokesman.

The ruling-class assault on him after the events following Kennedy's assassination was intended to compel the Nation of Islam to sacrifice its most effective organizer, agitator, and propagandist. Elijah Muhammad, the spiritual leader of the Nation, evidently having panicked at the real threat of a massive governmental campaign of repression, ordered Malcolm X to be silent for six months and, in effect, to be excluded in this period from any public role as a leader of the Nation of Islam.

But Malcolm knew that Muhammad's side-lining him for six months would not satisfy the white powers-that-be. They would not accept anything less than his complete shackling or his destruction as a mass agitator and organizer. He had no alternative but to break with Elijah Muhammad and carry on the work of mobilizing Black America independently of the Nation of Islam.

The year 1963 was a time when the phenomenal mass mobilizations by Black America against the system of Jim Crow, the American form of apartheid, were mounting and, with the help of Malcolm X was threatening to spill over from the

and see the road ahead. This insight prepared him for leading Black America to the next stage of its struggle for freedom—the struggle against Northern-style racial oppression and super-exploitation.

His message was loud and clear: Yes, Jim Crow is bad; but only hypocrites and fools will tell you that the suffering of Black America will come to an end if Jim Crow laws are abolished. This prediction didn't require foresight as much as it required the simple capability to see things as they really are.

Anyone who wanted to could see that, while the northern cities were free of apartheid-type laws separating society into first and second class citizens, Blacks were nevertheless restricted to the worst jobs, paid the lowest wages, condemned to live in the worst housing while paying the highest rents, and their children's education stunted in the most overcrowded, *de facto* segregated schools.

Malcolm X, as we know, began to carry out his attempt to build a mass Black nationalist liberation movement. In the course of his travels, he met with leaders of the Algerian revolution. Through his discussions with them, and with other socialists he met during his travels abroad, he came to the conclusion that the real villain was capitalism. The amazing evolution of Malcolm X in the last year of his life no doubt contributed heavily to his assassination.

Two roads to freedom

The civil rights movement exemplified one of two main strategic roads followed by African Americans in their over 400-year freedom struggle. This strategy is based on the simple idea that Black Americans should have the rights of all other citizens. They should have the right to integrate themselves into American society "with freedom and justice for all."

In the ongoing struggle for Black liberation the integrationist road is taken when a section of white society—for its own social, economic or political reasons—responds to Black people to form an alliance to gain a common objective.

The other strategic road followed by Blacks is often taken when the road to freedom through integration is blocked by the withdrawal of white allies from such an alliance. The history of the African American freedom struggle shows that this other road came under the heading of Negro or Black nationalism.

Southern states to the Northern cities.

There, a far more subtle but no less virulent form of racial injustice prevailed. This semi-revolutionary Black upsurge soon forced the American rulers into an historical retreat culminating in the complete abolition of the legally enforced system of second-class citizenship for Blacks in the Jim Crow states of the American South.

Malcolm X was one of those authentic revolutionaries able to see through appearances

The following pages are divided into three closely connected parts. It records Socialist Action's conception of the ongoing struggles by Blacks for liberation from national oppression and by the working class for their own liberation from wage slavery. It is the fruit of over 100 years of revolutionary Marxist thought on the question of the interrelation of the struggle of the world's oppressed nationalities and its working classes for social, economic, and political liberation.

The first section is a resolution, "Black Self-Determination and Socialist Revolution in the United States," adopted by the July 29-Aug. 2, 1992, Socialist Action national convention.

This resolution was drafted in February of that year by Socialist Action National Committee member Nat Weinstein and adopted by the Socialist Action Political Committee, and later the National Committee. It was then presented to SA members for its consideration over a four-month written and oral discussion period preceding the organization's national convention (the highest decision-making body of Socialist Action).

The second section is the SA National Committee majority's "Report on the Black Revolution," which was delivered to the 1992 national convention by National Committee member Jim Henle.

The third section, "The Meaning of the Rebellion in L.A.," was drafted by Nat Weinstein and published as an editorial in a special supplement to the May 1992 edition of *Socialist Action* newspaper in the immediate aftermath of the Los Angeles rebellion. It is especially important because it constituted further evidence of the accuracy of Socialist Action's conception of the coming American revolution as a combined revolution for both Black liberation and socialism.

This conception derives from my party's belief that because the conquest of full democracy for Blacks in the United States will be so costly to capitalism, the capitalist rulers will stop at nothing to block it. Black liberation could be won only by the overthrow of the capitalist state and its replacement by a workers government—in which American Blacks are certain to play a vanguard role.

Such an alliance of revolutionary Black nationalists and the revolutionary working class in the United States flows directly from the theory of Permanent Revolution authored by Leon Trotsky, who was, along with V.I. Lenin, a principle leader of the October 1917 Russian Revolution.

Lenin was one of revolutionary Marxism's major contributors to the theory of scientific socialism, one of his important contributions being a deepening of the movement's understanding of the national question.

Trotsky, after Lenin died, became the principal leader of the opposition to Stalinist degeneration of the revolutionary state created by the October Revolution. This uncompromising revolutionary Marxist was exiled by Joseph Stalin to Alma Ata, an isolated region of the Soviet Union in Central Asia, in January 1927. And then in January 1929, he was deported by Stalin from the territory of the USSR.

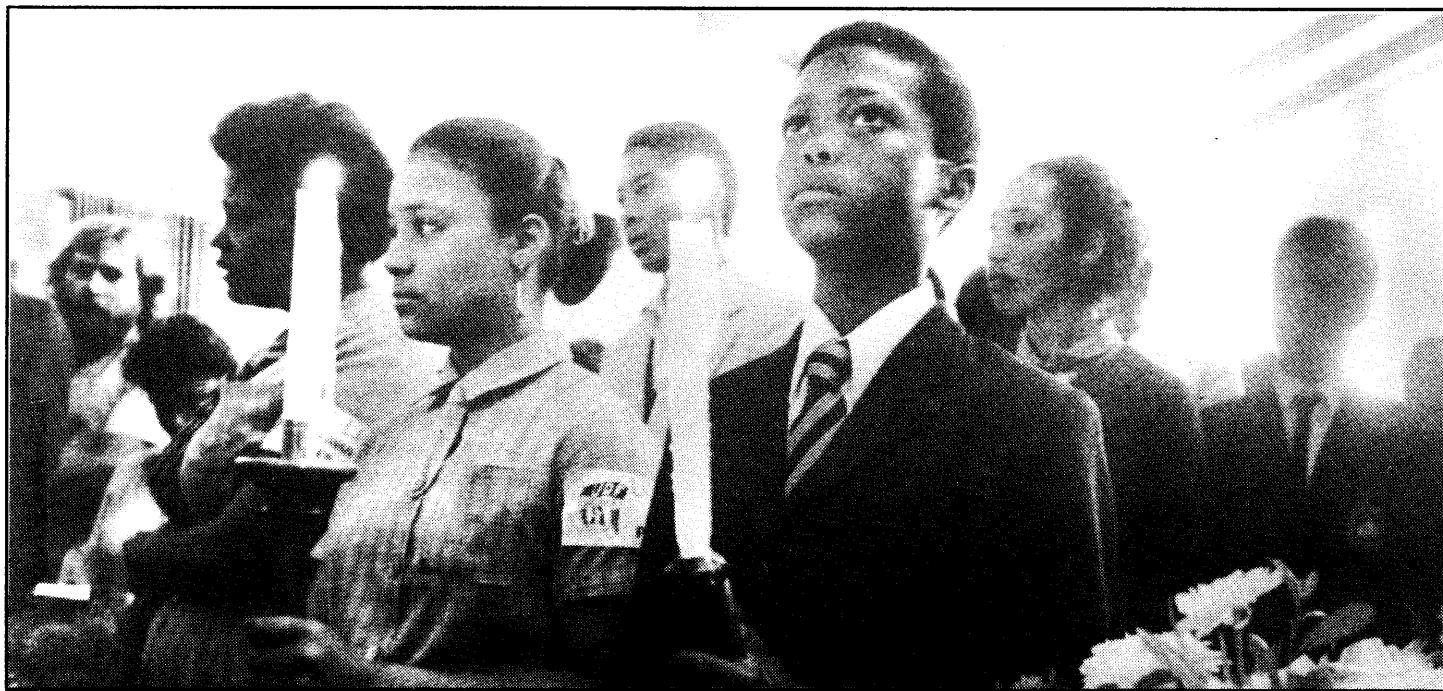
In August 1940, after a decade in which he was hounded from country to country by the Soviet dictator and his agents, Leon Trotsky was murdered by a Stalinist agent while in his final exile in Coyoacán, Mexico.

Finally, the fourth section of this pamphlet, titled "New Malcolm X biography slanders the man and his ideas," is a reprint of an article that appeared in the February 1992 issue of *Socialist Action* newspaper. The author of the article, Roland Sheppard, collaborated with Malcolm X in his last year alive. He criticizes the biography written by Bruce Perry for its inaccuracies and slanders and corrects the record.

We welcome comments on the contents of this pamphlet and may publish them in coming issues of *Socialist Action* newspaper. And we are prepared to send speakers to any groups interested in this subject. ■

To order a copy of "The Coming Black Rebellion," send \$2 to Socialist Action, 3425 Army St., San Francisco, CA 94111.

Role of Black students in South Africa struggle



Victor Steyw was a central leader of the Black student movement in South Africa during the 1980s. Today, he is a member of the Workers Organization for Socialist Action (WOSA), a South African revolutionary group. Michael Schreiber, co-editor of Socialist Action, interviewed Steyw in Capetown on June 2, 1992.

Socialist Action: In general, what were the goals and accomplishments of the student movement that you participated in during the 1980s?

Victor Steyw: The movement of the 1980s came in the wake of that of 1976. That was the threshold of student struggles in South Africa. In some respects, 1976 was almost comparable to the uprisings in France in 1968 in so far as, for the first time, our political issues were transferred outside of the student arena and into the main arena of struggle involving working-class people.

This was in terms of supporting the demands of the students for better educational facilities and structure, and challenging the whole curriculum of Black education. It was a challenge to the whole ideology of domination—which has been shattered once and for all.

The student political movement also gave a strong impetus to the development of the larger political movement, in the sense of consciously advocating—if one may use that word—a political leadership for Black working-class people. It gave the anti-apartheid struggle a clear class content, and promoted struggles like the worker-student alliance.

SA: The early 1980s saw some of the first actions by the new independent Black trade unions. Were there links at that time between the student activists in the universities and those elemental trade-union formations?

VS: That period was the genesis of the organic links between student activists and the labor movement. For example, the year 1980 saw a large-scale meat boycott in the Western Cape. Students were in the forefront there in terms of assisting with administrative tasks in the trade unions, and so on. It increased our understanding of the potential contributions that students could make, as well as some of their limitations.

SA: Concretely, what were some of their advantages, as you saw it? And what were their limitations?

VS: The advantage would be that the students were able to reach a much wider target audience in terms of generating support and getting financial assistance for workers who went on strike. At that time, the unions weren't as financially strong as they are today. They weren't as well organized.

I think one of the most prevalent limitations would have been that students were a part of a more privileged constituency. Because of that, there was a criticism that they were just flirting with the labor movement. After graduation, they could settle into relatively comfortable jobs, become economically contented—and forget.

But that is not a political issue as far as I'm concerned. The point is what happens while they are involved in the struggle. And a whole generation of those students, like myself, are still in the radical liberation movement. It's been at some economic cost to ourselves; some like myself have ended up in prison for a short or long period of time. But then one looks at the overall goals and objectives, and realizes that no one said this struggle of ours would be easy.

SA: What were some of the organizational forms that came about during the early 1980s?

VS: The Black students of the 1980s

made considerable organizational progress vis a vis the 1976 group of students, in as much as we were able for the first time to build a national infrastructure or network among different student populations in different parts of the country. That was critical. That kind of interface gave us a common destiny. And it raised problems that we were not previously aware of.

At the same time, of course, a whole host of students from the 1976 era had gone into self-imposed exile, and some had gone into forced exile. Many joined the guerrilla movement at the time.

But in terms of the problems, to be concrete: Here in the Western Cape, we had what we called the Committee of Eighty One. That was in so far as we had 81 high schools in the Western Cape—which has the highest concentration of high schools in the country. That's particularly because of historical government policy. "Coloureds" [mixed race people] are the majority in the Western Cape.

Harlem residents resist Audubon demolition

By DAWN REEL

NEW YORK—For two-and-a-half years a battle has been raging in Harlem. Columbia University, backed financially by the city government of New York, is seeking to demolish part of the Audubon Ballroom/San Juan Theatre complex.

The Audubon complex, richly designed by Thomas Lamb and built in 1912, is considered an historical landmark in the Harlem community. It became a cultural mecca for the Black and Latino communities from the 1940s on. Prominent political leaders have spoken there, including Puerto Rican patriot Don Pedro Albizu Campos, and Black nationalist Malcolm X. In addition, Malcolm X used the Audubon Ballroom as an organizing center for the Organization for Afro-American Unity (OAAU). He was assassinated there on Feb. 21, 1965.

Columbia University wants to use the New York City-owned site to build a \$200 million, profit-making, bio-tech facility that will be one more environmental hazard that Harlem residents daily suffer. Residents are infuriated by Columbia University's environmental racism in an already highly polluted, densely populated area where residents already suffer disproportionately from

skin rashes, asthma, stress from high noise levels, cancers, and other environmental effects.

Furthermore, Columbia University and its affiliate, Columbia-Presbyterian Hospital, have not been a benefit for local residents, who are overwhelmingly Black, Latino, and poor. Rather, Columbia has promoted "gentrification," resulting in the displacement of thousands of residents.

Understandably, the Harlem/Washington Heights community takes Columbia's promises of jobs at the new facility with a grain of salt. Instead, residents are calling for the Audubon complex to be turned into an international, multi-cultural community center for services such as daycare, adult education, a youth center, and a senior center that the community so desperately needs.

Despite a lawsuit by the community-based Save the Audubon Coalition (STAC), Columbia University still seeks to swing the demolition ball against the Audubon this fall.

The uprising that erupted just a few blocks uptown when "Kiko" Garcia was murdered by police in July, should be a warning to Columbia that local residents are tired of being both pushed around and ignored. ■

SA: So these high schools were both African and coloured?

VS: Mostly coloured. There were only two or three so-called African high schools. So that brings to the fore another very critical aspect of that period. For almost the first time, we saw contact being made between so-called Africans and so-called coloureds. We then suddenly realized that here we have a major language problem.

We students all spoke English. But virtually all so-called coloured students cannot speak an African language. Subsequently, a language project has been waged—specifically to address the acquisition of African languages by so-called coloured students. In white schools, they had an African language as an option. In our schools we never had that. Only the two official languages—English and Afrikaans.

SA: You're saying that now you do have the option?

VS: No. We still don't. African students in general were compelled to learn English and Afrikaans because it gave them economic and social mobility. They were forced to. For example, I can only speak mainly the two languages—and a smattering of an African language. But that's not enough to make contact with the community.

SA: How does the student movement today compare with that of the 1980s?

VS: The student organizations have seemingly gone into a kind of inertia—a lapse. I sometimes like to think, being subjective, that the militant student layer that I come from can never be duplicated! But of course, the issues are somewhat different from what they were then. And students are seemingly tied much more to academic performance, given the kind of economic imperatives that are involved for them.

For people such as myself—although it wasn't entirely voluntary—I found myself in a situation where I sacrificed two years of my academic life because of involvement in political issues. That doesn't tend to happen to the same extent today.

And rightfully so, I think. Unless it's absolutely necessary, students should be able to study and to make progress. The emphasis has now shifted in terms of the required technical skills and intellectual labor that will be needed to put the country on the right footing.

SA: In what way did the issues change in recent years?

VS: I would say that a lot of factors influenced the kind of inertia the student population had gone into. One was the growth of the African National Congress (ANC) and the formation of the United Democratic Front—which was the [political] front of the ANC inside the country. And larger "umbrella" issues came to center stage.

In general, the student organizations were negatively affected by this. And it was not only student groups were affected. The grassroots and civic structures also had to subordinate their day-to-day activities to the political issues as put forward by the mainstream of the liberation movement, the ANC.

SA: Do you think that the recent negotiations between the ANC and the government had a dampening effect on the student struggle?

VS: Definitely. Attention had been focussed on what is happening at the negotiations table to the extent—now this is my personal opinion—that students and others were asked to abdicate political activity to serve the preoccupations of the national leaderships. Students almost feel that there's nothing to do but play a supporting role to the negotiations.

SA: What are the major lessons of the student movement you participated in that you'd like to point out to our readers?

VS: Well, I'd be a little cautious about just drawing "lessons" in a mechanistic way. There have been some recent political rallies and demonstrations. Things are shifting all the time. The situation is very fluid.

I would simply say that students in this country have played a critical role in the Black liberation struggle. In the future, I'd like to see that the students are given recognition for that. ■

21st Century Party launched by feminists at D.C. conference

By SHIRLEY PASHOLK

The founding convention of the 21st Century Party took place in Washington, D.C., on the weekend of Aug. 29-30.

The first session began with speeches by Delores Huerta, acting chair of the 21st Century Party and co-founder of the United Farm Workers of America; Patricia Ireland, president of the National Organization for Women (NOW); Mel King, co-founder of the Rainbow Coalition; and Eleanor Smeal, president of the Fund for the Feminist Majority. This was by far the largest session of the convention.

Although 233 people registered, only about 150 participated in the working groups and the Sunday plenary.

Working groups met to discuss the draft platform and draft constitution and by-laws. Participants in these sessions carefully considered the draft documents line by line, offering many additions and modifications. They set up sub-committees, which held lengthy meetings to further refine their proposals for the Sunday plenary.

Working groups urged that the platform not simply detail the problems of the present, but stress a positive vision of the future. While many participants argued that the blame for current problems needed to be placed on the economic system, others argued that such "socialist" language would unnecessarily narrow participation in the 21st Century Party.

Many participants urged language explicitly rejecting support for any Democrat or Republican politicians. Others argued that the language requiring publicly endorsing the 21st Century Party platform and adhering to its goals was sufficient.

Regional working groups were charged with discussing, "How to build, expand, and organize the party (by region)." In addition to discussing the need to research each state's ballot laws and organizing on state and local levels, these groups discussed ideas for the party as a whole.



Following a speech by Illinois state legislator Monica Faith Stewart, a Democrat, the Sunday plenary discussed and adopted the founding platform and constitution and by-laws. Despite the earlier assurances that the written documents were simply drafts to provide a framework for discussion, the leadership intervened to make sure that modifications from the working groups remained within acceptable limits. While minor language changes and additions were readily accepted, Eleanor Smeal, Delores Huerta, and Monica Faith Stewart continually took the floor to argue against substantive working-group proposals.

An attempt to include working people in a list of those not represented by the Democrats and Republicans failed over-

whelmingly after Monica Faith Stewart argued that this would be pandering to racist white males, the Reagan Democrats, and the "Joe Six Packs."

Although one delegate explained that she felt manipulated as she witnessed the long hours of work and carefully considered changes from the working groups ignored, most delegates willingly deferred to the leadership's arguments.

Delores Huerta was elected as chair of the 21st Century Party. Eleanor Smeal was elected as secretary and Paula Craver as treasurer. The vice chairs elected were Roger Craver, Patricia Ireland, Mel King, Sara Nelson, Christine Rice, and Monica Faith Stewart.

Several local activists had mentioned

their desire to be on the "Interim Representative Council." They were shocked to learn that it was not elected. Delegates simply had the right to affirm or reject a 16-member slate proposed by the leadership. No additions or changes could be made to the slate.

Although the final agenda item was titled, "Call to Action," no proposed action campaign came out of the convention.

Despite NOW's continued support for Democrats, and the role of NOW leaders in squelching explicit language of non-support for all Democrats and Republicans, many local NOW activists sincerely believed that they were participating in an historic event.

They were attracted by the words of this new party, which in its constitution dedicated itself to "equality between women and men as well as people of all races and ethnicities; banning discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, religion, creed, disability, or marital status; non-violence; restoring a healthy environment; the elimination of exploitative labor practices that are reinstating conditions of virtual slavery, indentured servitude and child labor; demilitarization of all societies; the elimination of poverty, hunger, and homelessness; and the pursuit of liberty, justice, and happiness for all people."

This desire for real change, which brought many sincere activists to the convention, was expressed by Greater Cleveland NOW Co-president Terry Halfacre when, at the Great Lakes Regional Working Group meeting, she explained, "When reporters call and ask who I'm voting for, I think this time we still have to vote for what we don't want [i.e., Clinton], but next time we'll have our own party and finally be able to vote for what we do want."

Well-intentioned activists will soon find that, like the Democratic and Republican parties, the 21st Century Party is not what they want or need. Instead they will find it to be an ineffectual attempt to pressure the Democratic Party to be more responsive to the women's movement.

They will find it a diversion from independent mobilizations in the streets that can defend and extend existing rights. Similarly, they will find it a diversion from building a labor party truly independent of

By TINA BEACOCK

CHICAGO—In what the press called a "stunning upset," Carol Moseley Braun rode a wave of women's anger to win the Illinois Democratic Party primary for U.S. Senate in March. The incumbent, Alan Dixon, had outraged women when he voted with the Senate majority to confirm Clarence Thomas to the Supreme Court.

A triumphant Braun told supporters after the primary, "This proves that democracy is alive and well, and ordinary people can have a voice with no money."

She addressed the giant April 5 pro-choice rally in Washington, D.C., stating, "The people of Illinois three weeks ago proved that ... all we have to do is take power in our hands to make this government respond to us."

The National Organization for Women (NOW) and many others in the women's movement see Braun's campaign, and that of hundreds of other women candidates, as the way to secure women's rights.

The message of Braun's campaign, of NOW's campaign to "Elect Women...for a Change," and of other groups endorsing Braun—from the National Women's Political Caucus to WAC—is clear: To defend our rights, go to the polls.

Braun is the first African American woman to be nominated for the Senate by a major political party. There are currently two women, and no Black people, in the Senate.

Hardly a radical outsider

But will electing Braun to the Senate pose a serious challenge to the attacks on the rights of women, Blacks, and working people?

NOW encouraged Braun to run after the Thomas nomination, making a campaign contribution even before she declared her

Will Braun campaign effectively defend women, Blacks and workers?

candidacy. "We learned in September 1991, at the Thomas hearings that we couldn't rely on anyone but ourselves to defend our rights," Eleanor Smeal told the June NOW conference. "Illinois Senator Alan Dixon voted to confirm Clarence Thomas in November. And a surprised former Senator Dixon woke up in March 1992 to discover he'd lost."

Braun's Republican opponent, millionaire Richard Williamson, has been an advisor to Reagan and Bush. He denounces her as "a liberal machine candidate." His ads stating she was "Harold Washington's voice as a state legislator" and a Jesse Jackson delegate, and denouncing her stand on "welfare cheats" and the death penalty, play on racist fears.

Braun, a state legislator for 10 years, earned a reputation as a liberal. Pro-choice circles were familiar with her. She campaigned for and got the AFL-CIO endorsement. She has spoken at union meetings and rallies for the homeless.

But Braun was hardly a radical outsider, even among Democrats. Like former Mayor Harold Washington, she, too, was a regular moderate Democrat, serving as assistant Illinois House leader for 10 years before being portrayed as the rebel who unseated Dixon. She started her career as a prosecutor in the state attorney's office.

While Braun has garnered much pro-choice support in the current campaign, her general campaign literature does not even mention abortion or the right of a woman to choose.

While Braun calls for support to the Freedom of Choice Act, she has had nothing to say on the fight going on today to

restore abortion services at Cook County Hospital.

While she received overwhelming support in the Black community, her campaign has been marked, according to the *Chicago Tribune* (March 22, 1992), by "her unwillingness to pander to Blacks, women, or people upset at the confirmation hearing for Clarence Thomas."

Right after the primary, Braun reversed her longstanding opposition to the death penalty. After the Los Angeles rebellion, Braun gave high marks to the Chicago Police department for its "racial sensitivity," saying it was "light-years ahead of Los Angeles in how to handle racially-tinged issues."

This is in the city where Fred Hampton was murdered, and where one police commander, Jon Burge, is currently on trial for torturing prisoners.

What is Braun's program for labor? According to her campaign brochure, "She'll support business incentives to spark a sluggish economy."

"Riding their skirrtails"

More important, however, is that whatever her own intentions, she is running in the party that confirmed Thomas and backed Bush on every important question—from the Gulf War, to the abortion Gag Rule, to attacking the railroad unions, to the S&L bailouts.

She is running with Clinton, a right-to-work presidential candidate who just announced his draconian plans for reforming welfare.

Commenting on the prominence of women candidates at the Democratic con-

vention, a Clinton staffer made clear the importance of campaigns like Braun's when he stated, "We'll be happy to ride their skirrtails to victory."

Women, Blacks and other oppressed groups, and working people in general, are profoundly disillusioned with both the Democrats and Republicans. Campaigns like Braun's are essential to pull these disillusioned voters back into the Democratic fold.

The Democratic Party has nothing to offer women. Anti-women policies, from cutbacks in social services to the confirmation of Thomas, are bipartisan. What Malcolm X told Black people years ago is equally true for women: "You put the Democrats first, and the Democrats put you last."

For an electoral victory to serve women's interests, it must be independent of the two capitalist parties. It simply isn't possible to get the parties of "the fat cats" (as Eleanor Smeal called them) to defend the interests of woman, Blacks, gays and lesbians, or working people in general.

What great gains could be made if the energy channeled into electing Democratic politicians helped elect a woman as part of a labor party or a Black party slate!

Until that time, the strength of the movement to defend women's rights lies in mobilizing our power independently of the ruling rich and their two-party system. That is the only way ordinary people actually do have "a voice with no money."

At a recent rally to support the restoration of abortion services at the public hospital here, one candidate for Senate did speak up. Kate Kaku, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Senate, called for independent political action, and to mobilize in the streets to defend the right to abortion. Kaku will be on the Illinois ballot.

European currency debacle: Systemic expression of capitalism's crisis

By NAT WEINSTEIN

The European currency crisis may seem to most working people to be one of those things that titillates people who read the financial pages but leaves the rest of us cold. What's the big deal about the sudden rise or fall of a few cents in value of the currencies of European countries?

For most of us, it's as meaningful as the rise or fall in the prime interest rate. Unfortunately, however, like these other things, its effects on us can be very real—often making the difference between keeping a job (if we have one) or losing it.

What is the European Monetary System (EMS), which by all accounts has been dealt such a serious blow by the devaluation of the Spanish peseta, the Italian lira, and the British pound? And what are the real forces behind the current crisis?

The EMS is an agreement by nations participating in the European Economic Community (EEC) to maintain the relative values of their currencies within an agreed-on margin in which their currencies may fluctuate in value. Thus, so many British pounds are worth so many marks, or pesetas, or lira—and if the agreement holds, currencies within their assigned ranges in the EMS remain stabilized.

Such a stable system is desired by all capitalists so that each manufacturer can judge before investing in a new round of commodity production whether the goods that might be profitably produced in their own country can sell at competitive prices in other countries participating in the EEC. If they are surprised by a sudden change in relative currency values, it could mean losses leading to bankruptcy.

Stable currency is crucial

The importance of a stable value ratio between currencies can be better appreciated when one is aware that the problem for capitalists is knowing in advance whether or not the things they produce are likely to arrive in the market place at competitive prices or not. (The time lag may be as much as six months or more between when production begins and when the products reach targeted markets.)

A mistake in judgment could mean a large proportion of products that will sell below their value or not be sold at all. That could be financially fatal.

A larger—or smaller—degree of this unpredictability is intrinsic to capitalist production. Hundreds or thousands of independent capitalist manufacturers cannot predict with any degree of certainty the total number of comparable and competing commodities that will reach the markets at the end of any given cycle of production.

If these independent capitalist producers—each estimating and making independent decisions on the quantity they will make of a product—overestimate expected demand and produce more than the market can absorb, then the price will tend to fall in direct proportion to the degree of overproduction, and vice versa. Such anarchy is inherent in capitalist production.

Despite some objective criteria by which capitalists may make a more or less close estimate of future market conditions—for example, how well the market is absorbing a given commodity—conditions can be changed by a variety of factors with dramatic suddenness.

The difficulty of accurate prediction for a local market is multiplied when deciding the scale of production for international markets. However, calculations on the future state of supply and demand in domestic markets for given commodities are more predictable, among other things, because a nation's currency serves as a more dependable measure of value within national borders.

But in the modern world, where paper has replaced gold and silver money, no one can tell for sure how much a nation's currency is really worth.

A coined ounce of gold or silver or copper is virtually immune to tampering (devaluing or overvaluing) by governments

and bankers. But the values of paper currencies—especially when not freely exchangeable for gold and silver, as is the norm today—are notoriously subject to tampering. These currencies can quickly and catastrophically collapse in value.

The European Monetary System was conceived as a hoped-for transitory step toward establishing a single currency for all nations participating in the EEC—and ultimately for most of Europe. This, in turn, is seen as a possible step toward a single European state; a sort of United States of Europe.

If such a unification of European states could be realized—or even just the achievement of a common currency—it could facilitate a new expansion of production inside a common European market (the EEC).

Moreover, a successful establishment of a European Currency Unit (ECU) would accelerate the rate of competition in the



expanded common market. Many more inefficient producers, in an EEC tied together by a common currency, would tend to be forced out of business with the victors gaining a larger share of the market.

Furthermore, the rise in productive efficiency in the EEC would make its capitalists more effective competitors in the world market places against all other capitalists (the United States and Japan)—intensifying competition on the world scale. However, the short-term effect could be an expansion in economic activity and gross profits.

The role of Germany

The main beneficiary of the hoped-for gains of an expanded European market would be the German capitalists, whose already more efficient and competitive productive forces can quickly take advantage of the large-scale economy coming with an expanded European market. This advantage would also serve to make it a much more potent competitor on the world market against the world's other two capitalist powerhouses in Japan and the United States.

Japan is in the process of unifying the markets in its Asian spheres of influence, as is U.S. capitalism, with its project of unifying the markets of North America—all in the course of preparation for a coming economic battle-royal between the three main contenders for economic supremacy.

(The underdeveloped world's markets have long since been conquered by the major imperialist powers and have little to say about terms of trade in each of the imperialist spheres of influence.)

To accomplish a common market in Europe—not to mention the far more diffi-

cult task of achieving unification of Europe into a single superstate—a United (capitalist) States of Europe—is easier said than done. The outbreak of Europe's currency crisis starkly illuminates the dynamic standing in the way of economic unification of Europe, not to mention unifying politically and militarily.

Last month, we noted that the Germans, the main force driving Western Europe toward the EEC, have been forced to risk destabilizing all of Europe by following a financial policy which runs counter to the needs of the rest of the EEC.

World capitalism is experiencing the most severe recession since it was stabilized in the early 1950s. While the rest of Europe desperately needs measures that could spark their slumping economies—such as sharply lowered interest rates—the German central bank, the Bundesbank, has kept interest rates high to fight inflation and to continue to attract badly needed capital for financing

cies.

Adding further to the woes of the world's guardians of monetary stability was the successful assault on the pound by currency speculators. In the days just before its Sept. 16 collapse, currency speculators, seeing that some of the weaker economies in the EEC were under great pressure to devalue their currencies, rushed in for the kill. This led to a massive transfer of capital from pounds to marks. And when the German central bank, the Bundesbank, stubbornly refused to take measures to stop the stampede from the pound to the mark, the hordes of speculators, tasting blood, swamped efforts by Britain to support the value of its currency unit. The collapse of the pound gained speculators massive profits in a matter of days.

But most important, the world's "responsible" capitalist economists have learned to their dismay that the amounts of currencies traded in a single day can reach a trillion dollars—not much less than the amounts of cash at the disposal of the world's central banks needed to support currencies under speculator-attack.

As of this writing, the French franc appears to have been targeted by speculators. Even though the experts believe that the French economy is relatively sound and its currency is not overvalued, they wonder out loud if the central banks have the wherewithal to defend the franc against a sustained speculator drive to force down its relative value.

This, they say, is something new, arising from the revolution in technology that has made possible instant electronic transfers of huge amounts of capital from one currency to another.

But who are these "speculators?" The ones causing the most damage are not the legions of relatively small-time capitalist hustlers. They are the very same forces who have the most to lose if monetary stability is wrecked by their speculation.

Among those driven by the profit motive to assault the ramparts of their own system are to be found none other than the biggest capitalist financial institutions—who are unable to resist the temptation to make a quick buck.

Economic crisis is deepening

The first thing that needs to be said is that the monetary crisis is only one aspect of a developing generalized crisis of world capitalism. Secondly, it is in large part a result of the entirely unexpected difficulties encountered by world capitalism in their currently unsuccessful attempts to cash in on the "collapse of communism."

But the far deeper cause is the strategy followed for half a century by world capitalism to forestall a repeat of the deadly crisis which almost swallowed up world capitalism in the 1930s—and precipitated the horror of World War II.

Keynesian deficit financing, which has allowed systematic budget deficits and arms spending to be used to "regulate" the boom-bust cycles of capitalist production, didn't come without a very heavy price tag. While capitalism bought nearly half a century of relative stability, the impending catastrophe is essentially history foreclosing on the Keynesian mortgage.

But who will pay the mammoth cost of half a century of "buy now, pay later"? The American capitalist class knew a day of reckoning was inevitable. So they began to make the American working class pay the price almost 25 years ago when the assault on living standards was launched.

But even though it now takes two breadwinners to maintain a lifestyle that only one wage-earner could support in 1968, the more drastic cuts in living standards capitalists must impose on us will lead inexorably to an explosion of resistance that will shake the world.

Now the German, French, Swedish, and other sections of the European working class, which have not yet experienced a major assault on their living standards, will also be pressed to pay for the unpaid bills piled up by their own ruling classes.

But an abrupt shift from relatively benign class relationships to a sharp and rapid reduction in European workers' living standards is likely to provoke explosive resistance very early in the game.

Such an explosion, undoubtedly, will have an effect on the consciousness of American, British, and Eastern European workers. ■

Fourth Internationalist Tendency joins Solidarity

By SHIRLEY PASHOLK

The eighth and final national conference of the Fourth Internationalist Tendency (FIT) met in Pittsburgh, Pa., Sept. 19-20. By a vote of 18 to 11 1/2, its delegates approved "the unity of the Fourth Internationalist Tendency and Solidarity."

Like Socialist Action, the FIT resulted from the degeneration of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP). In late 1983, a number of those who had been undemocratically expelled from the SWP for defending the party's historic program—or who were in the process of being driven out of the party—gathered to form Socialist Action. A minority disagreed with the proposal to build the nucleus of a new revolutionary party—with a newspaper, a functioning national office, and viable local branches.

The majority felt that such a party, demonstrating the validity of our ideas in practice, was the best way to win the ranks of the SWP. But the minority argued that this would cut across needed "programmatic clarification," and rejected the conference decisions. In early 1984, the minority split from Socialist Action and formed a separate organization, the FIT.

The FIT changed their approach once the SWP ended its fraternal association with the Fourth International. Two years ago, they declared their intention to work for unification of all U.S. supporters of the Fourth International into a single sympathizing section.

What is Solidarity?

Solidarity was formed in 1986 by the merger of three small socialist groups—International Socialists, Workers Power, and Socialist Unity. The latter group had split from Socialist Action when they were unable to win a majority to their perspective of broad left regroupment. Believing that it was impossible to construct a party with a clear program, Solidarity aimed to regroup leftists on a minimal programmatic basis.

Approximately one-fourth of Solidarity's members belong to its Fourth Internationalist Caucus, a group that, while conducting no public activities in its own name, maintains fraternal ties with the Fourth International. Members of this caucus subscribe to *International Viewpoint*, a magazine published under the auspices of the Fourth International, and receive sporadic informational mailings.

They do not participate—as Socialist Action does—as a fraternal group in the Fourth International's pre-World Congress

"The FIT's dissolution into Solidarity is not a fusion, with all former FIT members welcome in the new organization. Only those who supported the unity proposal were to be immediately accepted into Solidarity."

debates. (U.S. legislation prohibits formal membership in international socialist bodies.) Their only meetings, approximately once every two years, are at Solidarity national conventions. These meetings, which are open to all Solidarity members, are limited to informational reports.

Solidarity as a whole has no ties with the Fourth International. Many of its members are longstanding opponents of the political views of the Fourth International. The Fourth Internationalist Caucus does not campaign for Solidarity as a whole to establish any link to the Fourth International.

Similarly, Solidarity members hold in contempt the concept of a Leninist vanguard party with a clear program and

important questions as Nicaragua, where they falsely maintained the dictatorship of the proletariat was in power, or the former Soviet Union, where they falsely concluded that Gorbachev was opposed to capitalist restoration. Some FIT members who opposed entry into Solidarity correctly pointed to the FIT's lack of any cohesive program.

The FIT's unclarity on class independence has led to support and active participation in the Ron Daniels presidential campaign and the 21st Century Party. This coincides with Solidarity's support for such non-working class formations.

Like Solidarity, the FIT became convinced that it is impossible—or sectarian—to construct a revolutionary

Information, Education, Discussion Bulletin

In Defense of Marxism

Solidarity is concerned that the FIT's *Bulletin in Defense of Marxism* might compete with *Against the Current*.

democratic centralist internal functioning. They view such a party as the height of sectarianism.

In voting to dissolve their organization to unite with Solidarity, FIT members also voted to join the present Fourth Internationalist Caucus. Despite criticisms of this caucus's inactivity, they agreed not to set up a separate caucus or tendency to represent their views.

A political convergence

Joining Solidarity marks the culmination of a process of convergence between the two organizations. Like Solidarity, the FIT papered over fundamental programmatic differences in vaguely formulated documents. The FIT never drew a balance sheet on such

socialist party in the United States today. This confusion, coupled with the failure to correctly assess developments in the former Soviet Union, has led to friendly coverage of the Committees of Correspondence ("C of C," the organization that recently split from the Communist Party) in both the FIT's *Bulletin in Defense of Marxism* and Solidarity's *Against the Current*.

Solidarity and Fourth Internationalist Caucus leader Joanna Misnik calls the very basis for the existence of the Fourth International into question when she writes in the September-October 1992 issue of *Against the Current*:

"The C of C, among others in the world socialist movement, will have to grapple with how—or whether—to define a revolutionary current. The objective basis for a world Communism resting on the post capitalist societies and defining revolution through the prism of 'actually existing socialism' has been abruptly removed. Also removed is the basis for a world current in left opposition to that kind of Communist movement."

The FIT's dissolution into Solidarity is not a fusion, with all former FIT members welcome in the new organization. Only those who supported the unity proposal were to be immediately accepted into Solidarity. Even these members would have their membership placed on hold if an objection was raised by their local Solidarity branch.

Members who had voted against dissolving the FIT, but agreed to go along with the majority decision, would have their membership applications reviewed by a commission, including Solidarity leaders and leaders of the former FIT.

A new BIDOM?

This conference also voted to maintain the *Bulletin in Defense of Marxism* (BIDOM), the former FIT's theoretical journal, as an "independent" magazine for U.S. Fourth International supporters. An editorial board was elected that included members of the former FIT who had joined Solidarity as well as some who had not. It also included two members of the Trotsky-

ist League.

The Association for Independent Socialist Politics, a group which split from Socialist Action at its August convention in order to participate in the Stalinist Committees of Correspondence, was invited to provide representatives for this editorial board. The leaders of this group who attended the conference expressed a desire to take part, although they indicated that they had to discuss their nominees further.

Supporters of the magazine, i.e., subscribers who pay an additional \$20 per year, will be polled by mail—not more than four times per year—on disputed questions.

Supporters must also express agreement with the editorial statement of principles, which includes the following position on regroupments: "Supporters of this magazine are committed to comradely discussion and debate as well as practical political cooperation which can facilitate eventual organizational unity of all Fourth Internationalists in the United States. At the same time, we want to help promote a broad and, within this, a revolutionary socialist regroupment in which perspectives of revolutionary Marxism, the Fourth International, and American Trotskyism will play a vital role."

Solidarity has expressed concern that the *Bulletin in Defense of Marxism* neither compete with its regroupment journal, *Against the Current*, nor publish articles critical of groups it works with, e.g. Mobilization for Survival and Committees in Support of the People of El Salvador. Conference delegates agreed that "the network of the magazine's supporters will not be organized to carry out any distinctive political activities in any social movement or organization."

Most members of the former FIT, regardless of their position on unity with Solidarity, signed on as magazine supporters. A few pointedly did not, questioning the lack of any organizational control and the largely ceremonial role to which both the editorial board members and supporters would be relegated.

Very few of the 39 percent minority who opposed dissolving the FIT will apply for membership in Solidarity. Those not joining Solidarity are neither forming a new organization nor joining any existing party. Many, regardless of whether they signed on as magazine supporters, have decided to maintain informal communication through a Fourth Internationalist Network while continuing to carry out their activities in the labor movement in their own cities.

Socialist Action's greetings to this conference stressed the importance of a clear program and the need for a party to implement it.

After commenting on the free and open discussion leading up to our convention decisions, our statement pointed out, "But, democratic as we are, we also have a clear program and a Leninist organization which functions in the best democratic centralist traditions of the old SWP to implement this program. We are working to construct the nucleus of the revolutionary party which can lead the working class in the overthrow of capitalism and the construction of a society based on human needs. This monumental task requires programmatic clarity and a Leninist party." ■

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75th Anniversary of the Russian Revolution: 'Ten Days That Shook the World' still frightens capitalists

By ROLAND SHEPPARD

Seventy-five years after the October socialist revolution in Russia, world capitalism is proclaiming its death with the collapse of the Soviet Union. In 1917, John Reed described the revolution as "Ten Days that Shook the World." This characterization remains as valid today as it was then.

The socialist revolution led by V.I. Lenin, Leon Trotsky, and the Bolshevik Party was the most conscious and democratic social upheaval in history. It raised the vision of the working class establishing a revolutionary society throughout the world—a true "new world order."

Drawing upon the experience of the 1905 insurrection in Russia, Trotsky developed his Theory of Permanent Revolution—i.e., that the capitalist class could no longer carry through the tasks of a capitalist revolution for national independence and land reform. Trotsky theorized that these tasks required a socialist revolution, for only working-class rule could accomplish the goals of the democratic revolution.

In all spontaneous insurrections, the masses form their own grassroots organizations. In Russia, these were called "soviets." In the February 1917 spontaneous insurrection—which overthrew the Tsar—soviets were formed by the masses, but without any central leadership.

Due to the vacuum of leadership, the capitalists and landowners were able to temporarily set up a Provisional Government. This government, based upon capitalist property relations, continued Russia's participation in the First World War.

The Bolshevik leaders in Russia gave critical support to the Provisional Government. But Lenin, when he returned from exile in April 1917, strongly opposed this support. Lenin's April Thesis (in basic agreement with Trotsky's Theory of Permanent Revolution) called on the party to challenge the government, with a call for "all power to the soviets" as the potential motor force of a socialist revolution.

From this point on, Lenin and Trotsky led the party to win the leadership of the soviets. In the process, the soviets became organs of dual power in opposition to the Provisional Government.

Leon Trotsky's "History"

To best understand the dynamics of the Russian Revolution, readers should consult "The History of the Russian Revolution" by Leon Trotsky. In this book, Trotsky explained the relationship between the Bolshevik Party, the working class, and the broad Russian masses.

Key lessons of the book concerned the relationship between the science of Marxism and the art of revolutionary politics.

The science includes the following points:

1) The capitalist class, in the context of world imperialism, could no longer play a progressive role in carrying out a revolution for national independence.

2) The oppressed nationalities within the Russian Empire could only be united based upon their unconditional right to self-determination.

3) The needs of the poorest peasants (the majority) had to be unconditionally supported.

4) It was necessary to form a workers' state through a socialist revolution to end the capitalist economic crisis and for society to move forward.

5) There was a need for a revolutionary combat party based in the working class to lead the masses.

The art of revolution meant Lenin's building of a party rooted in the working class and the day-to-day application of the



'Unlike the February Revolution, the October Revolution was not spontaneous. It was consciously organized and led by the Bolsheviks, who felt the insurrectional mood of the masses.'

party's program to organize and prepare the working class (with the support of the peasantry) for the seizure of power.

The interplay between the leadership of the party and its ranks, and between the party and the working class and peasant masses was not science but art. It required a feel for the mood of the masses in order to determine how to politically lead the revolution and to sense the right moment for insurrection.

This meant formulating the slogans and demands that corresponded with the consciousness of the masses and that also raised the consciousness of the masses.

The democratic demands for land, bread, and peace became the revolutionary demands of the socialist revolution.

These demands and approach of the Bolshevik Party served as the basis of the "Transitional Program," written by Trotsky in 1939.

Costs of civil war

Unlike the February Revolution, the October Revolution was not spontaneous. It was consciously organized and led by the Bolsheviks, who felt the insurrectional mood of the masses. The Bolsheviks led the democratic seizure of power by the working class with the support of the peasant masses based on the institutions of the majority—the soviets. For the first and only time in history, the majority had control over its own destiny.

All of the capitalist world recoiled in horror of the power of the Russian Revolution. After World War I, the capitalist powers put their differences temporarily aside and set up an economic blockade of the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union was invaded on 13 fronts during the Civil War from 1918 to 1922.

The new workers' state prevailed, however, because of the social gains of the

revolution and the conscious self-sacrifice of the working class and the poor peasantry. But victory was won at a tremendous cost to the Soviet economy. It also decimated the cadre of the Bolshevik Party, who were the best fighters and leaders of the Red Army and the most advanced leaders of the soviets.

The rise of Stalinism

The economic blockade and failure of the revolution to extend itself into Europe due to the betrayals of the Social-Democratic parties was the material base for the rise of the Stalinist bureaucracy. Stalin's rise to power was directly opposed to the over-all policies advocated by Lenin and Trotsky and later by the "Left Opposition."

Stalin was able to usurp the power of the soviets through dictatorial police-state methods. In the name of "building socialism in one country" he used the authority of the October Revolution to subordinate the struggles of the world working class to the interests of the soviet bureaucracy.

In the process, the Soviet Communist Party became the political instrument for counter-revolution both inside and outside the Soviet Union. (For a complete understanding of the process that took place, readers should read Trotsky's "The Revolution Betrayed.")

In the section on the Soviet Union in the "Transitional Program" (the founding document of the Fourth International), Trotsky summed up the whole process. He wrote:

"The Soviet Union emerged from the October Revolution as a workers' state. State ownership of the means of production, a necessary prerequisite to socialist development, opened up the possibility of rapid growth of the productive forces. But the apparatus of the workers' state underwent a complete degeneration at the same time; it was transformed from a weapon of

the working class into a weapon of bureaucratic violence against the working class and more and more a weapon for the sabotage of the country's economy. The bureaucratization of a backward and isolated workers' state and the transformation of the bureaucracy into an all-powerful privileged caste is the most convincing refutation—not only theoretically, but this time practically—of the theory of socialism in one country.

"The USSR thus embodies terrific contradictions. But it still remains a degenerated workers' state. Such is the social diagnosis. The political prognosis has an alternative character: Either the bureaucracy, becoming ever more the organ of the world bourgeoisie in the workers' state, will overthrow the new forms of property and plunge the country back to capitalism; or the working class will crush the bureaucracy and open the way to socialism."

Capitalist counter-revolution

Since the October revolution, there have been successful overturns of capitalism in several parts of the world, but these revolutions did not follow the Russian model.

Due to the weakness of imperialism and material aid given by the Soviet Union because of the Cold War, revolutions were successful despite the non-existence of a revolutionary party like the Bolsheviks. But the lack of such a party has left all of the deformed workers' states vulnerable to capitalist intervention.

At the present time, the bureaucracy in the former Soviet Union has been attempting to restore capitalism. The workers have not yet fully responded in defense of the social gains of the October revolution.

Thus with the collapse of the Soviet Union, the specter of a new capitalist world order of counter-revolution haunts the workers and oppressed masses of the world.

With the mass bombing of Iraq, the war in Yugoslavia, famine in Africa, the worldwide unemployed and homeless masses, the destruction of the environment, and the AIDS plague, we now face the specter of the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse. The choice is either socialism or barbarism.

The current world-wide attacks upon the living standards of the masses have not as yet provoked widespread struggle. But it is fair to assume that, as the world's economic crisis deepens, such a response will be forthcoming.

The lessons of the October Revolution are essential for today. The United States has the most conscious and violent ruling class in history. Their "New World Order" precludes the successful transformation of society without the establishment of a Leninist Party. There are no short cuts. This has been demonstrated in Nicaragua and El Salvador and in the former Soviet block countries.

On the 75th anniversary of the Russian Revolution, we remember the words of James P. Cannon, the founder of American Trotskyism, on the 25th anniversary in November 1942. His speech was made when the Soviet Union was pressed to the wall by the German invasion—just before the Red Army closed the trap on Hitler's armies at Stalingrad. Cannon's words ring true for today:

"The Russian Revolution is in the greatest peril today. We do not deceive ourselves or others with any false optimism about the danger confronting the Soviet Union. We see the situation as it really is. We know that the fate of the Soviet Union hangs in the balance, that it depends now, more than ever, on the world revolution of the proletariat and the colonial masses. But we have faith in the the world revolution, and because of that, we retain our hope in the ultimate regeneration of the Soviet Union.

"We keep undimmed our faith that the world revolution will release humanity from the terrible vise of the war and open up a new stage of progress on the way to a communist future. Because of that, here on the occasion of the 25th anniversary, as we celebrate the living revolution, we can still express the confident hope that the funeral of the Russian Revolution, which so many renegades and traitors are announcing, will not merely be postponed, but will never take place."

Kosovo: An example of Yugoslav Stalinists lip-service to rights of nationalities



Terror on the streets of Sarajevo: A preview for Albanians in Kosovo?

LUC DELAHAYES/SIPA PRESS

(Last of a two-part series)

By GERRY FOLEY

Kosovo is the legendary heartland of the Serbian nation. But most of the population today is Albanian. Kosovo is the likely site of a new extension of the war provoked by the neo-Stalinist regime of the Serbian strongman Slobodan Milosevic.

When Serbia took Kosovo from Turkey in 1912, Serbs in the region were already far outnumbered by Albanians. Despite its attempts to settle Serbs and Montenegrans in the area and to force the Albanians to leave, the Yugoslav monarchy failed to change the ethnic pattern.

However, the Great Serbian rulers did leave a legacy of extreme bitterness among the Albanians. As a result, when the Italian fascist armies occupied the area in 1940, the Kosovo Albanians welcomed them as liberators.

The severest test of the Yugoslav Communist Party's (CP) principles on the national question was its attitude to the Albanian population of Kosovo. After it came to power, the CP retreated from the national policy that it had followed during the partisan struggle of the second world war.

A striking illustration of this is the fate of the resolution of the founding conference of the National Liberation Committee for Kosovo and Dukadjin. The meeting took place in the village of Bujan at the end of 1943. The following passage from the Bujan resolution obviously came to stick in the throats of the Yugoslav Stalinist regime:

"Kosovo and Mehojia is an area where Albanians form the majority of the population. Always and still today, they have wanted to be united with Albania. For this reason, we have considered it our duty to point out the right road by which the Alba-

Albanians in Kosovo may soon suffer the same fate as the Muslims in Bosnia Herzegovina, as Serbian strongman Milosevic tries to carve out an empire for himself. A study of the experience of the Albanians in Kosovo reveals a history of deceit and betrayal by the Yugoslav Stalinists, who never gave more than half-hearted support to the rights of oppressed nationalities.

nian people can achieve their aspiration. The only way that the Albanians of Kosovo and Metohija can unite with Albania is through joining in a united struggle with the other peoples of Yugoslavia against the occupiers and their lackeys.

"Because this is the only way to win freedom, when all the peoples, including the Albanians, will be able to say what they think about their fate, with the right of self-determination up to and including separation. The guarantee of this is the National Liberation Army of Yugoslavia, as well as the National Liberation Army of Albania, to which it has close ties."

But the Bujan resolution became a dead letter after the victory by the Tito CP leadership. It eventually became a scandal for Serbian chauvinists in the Communist Party. Thus, in 1987, Branko Petranovic, an official historian of the war period, wrote in a major Yugoslav publication: "The Kosovo leadership must turn its back on it [the Bujan resolution], wipe it out,

and publicly distance itself from this document, inasmuch as it represents an open expression of separatism."

It had become the fashion in Serbian and central government circles to view the resolution as an aberration, perhaps owing to the participation of a majority of Albanians in the Bujan conference.

Horvat rescues the facts

The liberal Titoist economist Branko Horvat had to rescue the facts in his courageous book "The Kosovo Question" (Globus, 1988, Zagreb). He documented well the fact that the Bujan resolution was in line with the general approach of the Communist Party during the war period. He also chided Petranovic for subjectivism: "Historical facts cannot be crossed out."

When Horvat's book was published, Kosovo Albanians were being denounced as "counterrevolutionaries," even defending their right to autonomy and equality with the other peoples of Yugoslavia. Nonethe-

less, by 1988, the totalitarianism established by the victorious CP had broken down to the point that it was possible, to some extent, to publish critical studies.

Horvat is no revolutionist. In this book, he explicitly rejects the "right of self-determination up to and including separation" as utopian.

He writes: "As long as ethnic groups are not systematically discriminated against, there is no right to self-determination. In that case, the predominant consideration is the principle of state integrity. The reason for this is the priority that the world community gives to the stability of the international legal system and peaceful coexistence, for which the essential prerequisite is the unalterability of frontiers."

Thus, Horvat stays within the framework of Stalinist reformism. The extent of national rights to be granted is entirely subordinate to pragmatic considerations of "international politics." Nonetheless, the record that he restores is damning for the Tito Stalinist regime.

First of all, Horvat explains why such a concession to Albanian national feeling was necessary. At the beginning of the war, the Communist Party had only 239 members in the region, of whom only 23 were Albanians.

"This small party membership," Horvat writes, "was unable to organize the national liberation struggle among a population that awaited the Italians as liberators."

Therefore, the Albanian Communist movement, organized with help from the Yugoslav CP, played a decisive role. "Young Kosovars were ready to join Albanian brigades, from Kosovo or Albania. But they were not ready to join mixed brigades for fear of being declared supporters of reactionary forces and then liquidated. It is significant that the Fourth Kosovo-Metohija Brigade was formed in Krum, on Albanian territory."

The trust of the Albanians in their Slavic allies evidently did not go very deep, even though many felt compelled to join with them against the brutal fascist occupiers. The suspicions of the Albanian people led to rebellion against the victorious Yugoslav forces in 1945.

And the mistrust of the Albanians proved quite justified. At the founding congress of the Serbian CP in 1945, the Central Committee secretary Djoko Pajkovic acknowledged:

"We committed such big mistakes in Kosovo and Metohija in dealing with the Albanians that they became convinced that nothing had changed from the time of old Yugoslavia. For example, they were forbidden to display their flag, forced to speak Serbian. ... The leading posts were taken by Serbs and Montenegrans, which provoked revolt among the Albanian masses. ... When fighting was going on, a number of officers came from the country, but after the liberation there have been committees in which there have been no Albanians, but mainly Montenegrans and Serbs."

In Kosovo, in 1956, 86.6 percent of the secret police were Serbs and Montenegrans, while these two groups made up only 27.4 percent of the local population at the time. Only 13.3 were Albanians, although the latter represented 64.9 percent of the population. Kosovo was only the most extreme example. In general, Serbs predominated in the secret police and among the officers of the new Yugoslav army.

Moreover, also in 1956, the secret police staged a major frameup trial in Kosovo and forcibly disarmed the Albanian population.

The liberal Titoist Horvat opines that disarming the people was a good thing since if this had not been done there might have been armed resistance to the repressive campaign launched in 1981 and thus "more bloodshed."

But Horvat deplors that "the operation was accompanied with beatings, mistreatment, torture, arrests, and jailings without trial. Some murder cases have not been cleared up to this day. Yugoslav public opinion was not properly informed about these events, which was a serious political (and journalistic) failing." He goes on: "The methods used led to the conclusion

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that the aim of the operation was retaliation and intimidating the population."

Under the thaw

In 1966, a liberalization was launched at the Yugoslav Communist Party plenum on the island of Brioni. Tito's minister of the interior, Aleksandar Rankovic, accused, among other things of being a Great Serbian chauvinist, was removed. In the atmosphere of the thaw and the disgrace of the political police, revelations began about the past repression of the regime, which had supposedly now corrected those errors.

Thus, at the Serbian CP plenum in 1966, Veli Deva talked about large-scale surveillance of intellectual workers by the secret police: "But those in the worst position were teachers of the Albanian language, literature, and history." They were often called in by the secret police and warned not to teach anything not approved by the Council for Education and Culture of the Serbian republic."

In a contribution to a seminar on "Bosnia and the Bosniaks" held in 1990, Muhamed Filipovic recounted how a similar totalitarian straitjacket had been imposed on the Bosniaks: "After 1947, an extremely aggressive campaign was waged against their [the Muslim Bosniaks'] individuality ... against their national culture, education and charitable institutions...."

"The regime that unquestionably helped save the Bosniak Muslims from extermination, very quickly wore out its credit, and turned all thinking Muslim-Bosniaks against it."

Unlike the totalitarian regime in the USSR, however, the Titoists came to power as the result of a revolution and not a counterrevolution. (The actual revolutionary leadership of the Russian revolution was liquidated by Stalin, the chief of the rising bureaucracy). Under the pressures of the partisan war, the Yugoslav CP was led to go too far for the Kremlin, which did not want a social revolution in the country. But its break from Stalin's line was pragmatic and limited.

"A War Within the War"

Milovan Djilas, one of Tito's major lieutenants, broke from the Communist Party some years after the establishment of the new regime, going to the right. In his book, "A War Within the War," Djilas explains that people who criticized the Communist Party during the war were harshly treated. After the war, they were imprisoned or shot.

A cult of personality was built up around Tito. It was not so false as the Stalin cult, since the Yugoslav leader had won real respect from the masses for his role during the war. But it was hardly less religious and all pervasive.

The general effects of this totalitarian regime were similar to those of Stalinism in the Soviet Union. Horvat alludes to them over and over again by his references to the failure of the press to report problems, the failure of the official institutions to study the reality in the country, the absence of real public opinion. In the conditions of bureaucratic dictatorship, it was inevitable that historic inequalities would be integrated into the pattern of privilege.

As an official economist, Horvat attributes the failure of the 1966 liberalization to lead to effective democracy and to the solution of the country's problems, in particular the national question, to economic factors and mistakes by the leaders. The introduction of self-management (primarily autonomy of factory managers) in 1952, he notes, was followed by a rapid growth of the economy. In 1965, he writes, before the Brioni plenum, an "extremely unprofessional economic reform was adopted." The country then entered a phase of stagnation.

The students rebel

The liberalization unleashed processes that "discredited the progressives." In 1968, there were radical student demonstrations in Belgrade, similar to those seen in Western Europe, especially France, in the same period. Among the slogans raised by the Belgrade students was "down with the red bourgeoisie!"

A few months after the demonstrations in Belgrade, Albanian students also went

into the streets in Kosovo. Horvat lists the following slogans, among others: "We want a republic!" (Although they are as numerous as the Slovenians, the Albanians have been denied a republic of their own on the basis that they are not a nation but a "national minority, since the majority of the Albanian nation lives in Albania!") "We are Albanians and not Yugoslavs!" "The national liberation struggle did not bring freedom to the Albanians!" "We want the [Albanian] national flag!" "Freedom for the political prisoners!" "Long live Adem Demaçi!"

(Demaçi was an Albanian writer who

between Kosovo and the most developed republic of Yugoslavia, grew from one to four to one to 6.1—as big, Horvat notes, as that between England and North Africa. What is more, the insufficient jobs available were allotted unevenly. Out of every thousand employed in Kosovo, 258 were Montenegrans, 228 were Serbs, and only 109 were Albanians, although the last grouping was a large majority.

Thus, the reforms clearly did not amount to a consistent revolutionary policy to eliminate the inequalities. At the same time, there can hardly be any doubt that the Yugoslav authorities did not want the

inequality.

In this situation, the concessions given to the Albanians only led to frustration, and to another explosion of student unrest in Kosovo in 1981, which was followed by a wave of repression, one that Horvat says in one way or another touched a hundred thousand people.

The response to this repression became an important factor in deepening the crisis of the Yugoslav Stalinist regime. Horvat writes:

"In Kosovo, three exceptionally important innovations were accomplished. The first has to do with mass organization. Of course, organization on a national basis is the worst sort of mass organization. However, it is a great advance by comparison with a lack of mass organization. This is moreover a lesson for our social theorists showing that in Yugoslavia, the nation plays a much stronger integrating role than class, party or ideology.

"In the Labin strike [the strongest Albanian protest against the abolition of Kosovo autonomy], the miners did not get any class solidarity from other miners. [The pragmatic Horvat does not inquire about the reasons for this, although he saw class solidarity among workers of different nationalities in the struggle against the fascist occupiers.] The policy took care of the activists. And the leadership of the unions did not even deem it necessary to talk to the miners.

"The second innovation is the public attempt of the victimized groups that the police and state organizations act as mandated. The petitioners went to Belgrade and forced their way into the parliament and Central Committee.

"Both innovations would have been quite unthinkable a few years ago when the government would have arrested any citizens assembling publicly as 'enemies.'

"The third innovation has to do with citizens challenging political functionaries in the press. Before, the latter called the people to order. Now the situation is reversed."

A springboard to power

On the other hand, the Serbian neo-Stalinist leader Milosevic took the repression of the Albanian movement and the campaign of Serbian chauvinist hysteria as his springboard to power. He managed to mobilize many hundreds of thousands of Serbs to demonstrate for a "Serbian Kosovo." He removed the independent Kosovo government, in fact abolishing Kosovar autonomy.

Milosevic also mobilized Serbian masses under chauvinist slogans to bring down the government of the autonomous province of Vojvodina, where there is a large Hungarian minority. All of this he called the "Great Antibureaucratic Revolution," hoping to convince the Serbian people that he was fighting the hated bureaucracy.

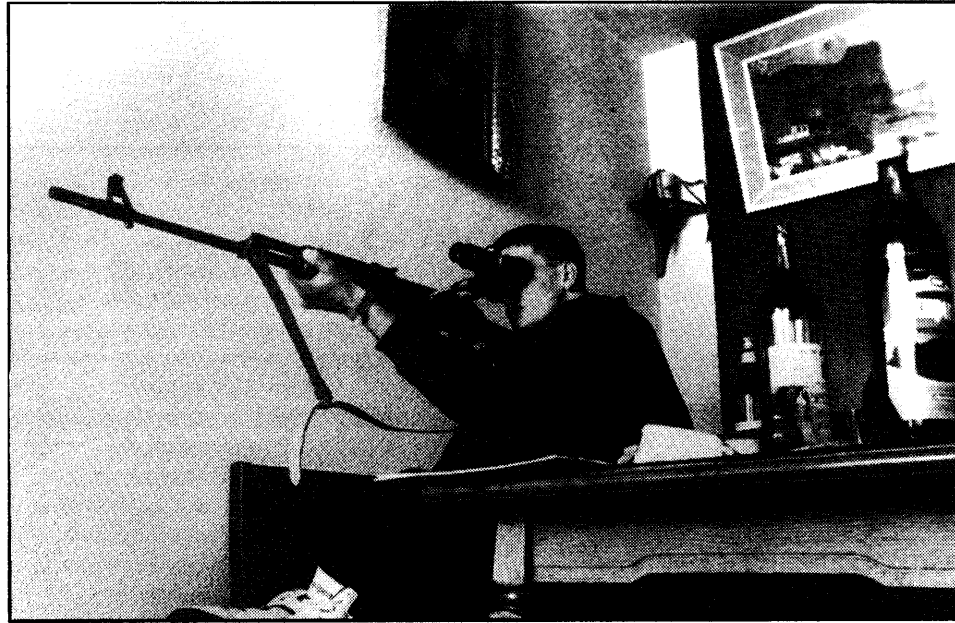
Milosevic's policy became clearly not just to centralize the republic of Serbia by liquidating the autonomy of Kosovo and Vojvodina but to "recentralize" all of Yugoslavia around Serbia. This line began to force the reluctant bureaucracies in the other republics into confrontation with the Serbian party boss.

A conflict had been growing with Slovenia, where the Belgrade Stalinists had considered a military takeover to oust what they considered a too tolerant local regime and stop the growth of the democratic movement.

The Croatian regime, too, installed on the basis of the "antinationalist" purge of the early 1970s, was now driven with extreme reluctance to criticize Milosevic. National resentments boiled in Croatia. In the first real parliamentary elections in 1990, new Croat nationalist parties overwhelmed the Communist Party.

However, Milosevic refused to retreat. He continued to push for a "recentralization" of Yugoslavia around his Serbian regime and to try to whip the balky nationalities back into line. Facing his ultimatum, their only recourse was to declare independence.

Milosevic's last card was to try to construct a greater Serbia out of the ruins of the Yugoslav federation. The crisis of the Yugoslav variant of Stalinism thus led to open war—a form of Stalinism particularly contradictory, which, because of its revolutionary origin, had proved to be a highly explosive compound. ■



An anonymous sniper in Sarajevo. Milosevic's Lebanon in Yugoslavia.



founded the Revolutionary Movement for the Unification of the Albanians in 1961 to press for exercise of the right of self-determination up to and including separation that was guaranteed by the Communist Party. He spent the next two decades in prison.)

The liberalization went further in Croatia, under a nationalist wing of the Communist Party. This development actually challenged the power of the central government and the monolithism of the Yugoslav CP. Tito himself gave the signal for a purge of the Croatian party, which ended the period of thaw. A number of Croatian Communists, including the current president of Croatia, Franjo Tudjman, were imprisoned.

A centralist opposed to Croatian nationalism and to any form of "national economy," Horvat writes that he lost all confidence in the CP leaders at the time of the purge, except for the Slovenian ones. In fact, the reform elements in the Slovenian CP and CP youth took the leadership of the reviving reform movement in the 1980s.

Stalinists grant concessions

In 1974, after the movement for national and other democratic rights had been stopped by the Croatian purge, a new Yugoslav constitution was adopted giving additional autonomy to the constituent republics and to the national minorities in Serbia.

At the same time, important concessions were made to Kosovo, in particular the establishment of a university (in 1970). By 1981, the new university had 26 thousand students, an enormous advance from the prewar period, when there were only about 17 thousand students in the whole of Yugoslavia—of whom 19 were Albanians. But there were no jobs for these students.

In the period from 1952 to 1981, the gap

inequality to reach such an explosive point, and that they took important measures, within the limits of their resources to avoid that.

The fundamental problem is that Yugoslavia remained a small, relatively backward country. And within its borders, it did not have the capacity to build an economy strong enough to eliminate long-standing historic unevennesses.

A prime example was the attempt to set up a steel industry in Macedonia. The installations set up could not produce at competitive prices. The project thus failed to improve the position of Macedonia. And was seen in the more developed republics as a waste of their money.

The Yugoslav CP became the victim of its own narrow nationalistic conception of building a socialist economy, its abandonment of the perspective of extending the socialist revolution. The left tendencies that existed in the party at the time of the break from the Kremlin did not prevail. The Tito regime, like the other ruling bureaucracies, oriented decisively toward a policy of international class collaboration, hoping to profit from greater integration into the capitalist world market.

After the end of the world capitalist boom in 1974, the Yugoslav rulers found themselves in a trap. Their plans exploded, and the economy went into a nose dive in which it has remained. Hyperinflation began long before the present war. Horvat attributes problems on the world market to the rise in the oil price. But they actually reflected a growing crisis of the capitalist economy as such.

On the other hand, Horvat does note correctly that in the context of a shrinking economy, the inequalities among the Yugoslav peoples sharpened, with a corresponding increase in ethnic tensions. That was particularly true when the leadership had no consistent program for fighting

“The Panama Deception” An exposé of the U.S. invasion

By MICHAEL SCHREIBER

“The Panama Deception,” a documentary film directed by Barbara Trent. Written and edited by David Caspar. Produced by the Empowerment Project. One hr., 34 min.

In December 1990, the United States waged war on Panama. It was the largest and bloodiest war since Vietnam—and a warm up for the Persian Gulf. Thousands died. Thousands were taken prisoner. Communities were laid waste. The entire country was occupied by 24,000 U.S. soldiers.

The people of Panama still remember the war. Many had relatives who disappeared that Christmas season. A few found their relatives in the rubble of destroyed buildings. Others found them in one of the mass graves that the authorities have allowed to be opened.

But people in the United States know very little about the war. How could we? Our sources of information—television, the daily papers, the government itself—hid the truth from us. They said, for example, that few civilians died. No civilian targets were hit. And there was no invasion. No war. Just a search for the “drug dealer” Noriega.

Now, in “The Panama Deception,” people in this country have an alternative source of information. This low-budget film, directed by Barbara Trent, provides interviews and on-the-spot footage to help us make up our own minds.

We are shown scenes from El Chorrillo, a poor neighborhood of Panama City where whole blocks of houses and apartments were bombed, machine-gunned, and demolished by U.S. troops. Mortar shells light up the sky as they explode. Against a sheet of flame, people run wildly in the streets.

Witnesses say that in the days after the invasion, U.S. soldiers entered El Chorrillo and torched those houses that were still standing. Throughout the country, well over 20,000 were made homeless.

We see cars with people still inside that were flattened by U.S. tanks. We see the

bodies pulled out from a mass grave where the U.S. troops hurriedly deposited their victims—one of 15 mass graves identified in the country.

Recently, a House of Representatives sub-committee concluded that only “300-

sion—but most of it has been destroyed. However, some of the government’s footage appears in “The Panama Deception.” It was obtained by the filmmakers by means of the Freedom of Information Act (after a legal struggle).



Film director Barbara Trent is confronted by MP as she attempts to interview homeless Panamanians.

odd” Panamanians were killed during the invasion. But the film—citing several Panamanian human rights organizations—puts the number of deaths closer to 4000. The International Red Cross has collected over 1500 reports of people who had “disappeared.”

Getting an accurate count of the the casualties was made difficult because the hospitals were surrounded by U.S. troops, and reporters were denied access. The U.S. Southern command even removed the registries from the hospitals and morgues.

The Defense Department reportedly made an extensive film record of the inva-

Some scenes in the film were supplied by Panamanian cameraman Manuel Becker and other local news reporters, who filmed at great risk to themselves. One photographer was shot and killed by the troops. Others were arrested or had their film destroyed.

Six months after the invasion, Barbara Trent and her film crew did their own on-location filming in Panama. Even then, the U.S. military dogged their steps. In one scene in the film, military authorities attempt to stop the crew from interviewing homeless people who had been given “shelter” inside an airplane hangar.

Eventually, the officials are forced to back off by the homeless people themselves. One man tells the filmmakers that the U.S. occupation forces “are worse than Noriega. Under Noriega we used to eat three meals a day. Now we don’t get even one!”

Is it true that the U.S. government was forced to act in Panama in order to extradite Gen. Noriega? To answer the question, “The Panama Deception” makes use of archival material going back to early in the century, when Washington split off Panama from the country of Colombia in order to build and maintain control over the canal.

Subsequently, Panama became a virtual U.S. colony, where Southern-style Jim Crow laws applied. It provided an important naval and air base, a stepping stone for the United States to dominate the Andean region of South America.

In 1977, President Carter negotiated a new treaty with Panama’s head of state, Omar Torrijos. The treaty would have shut down all 14 bases of the U.S. Southern Command in 1999, and would have returned the canal zone to Panamanian sovereignty.

The film describes, however, how the Reagan administration sought to overturn the treaty and disrupt the Panamanian government and economy. The CIA poured over \$10 million into the 1990 elections in order to defeat the Noriega slate.

After the invasion, the U.S.-backed candidate, Guillermo Endara, was summarily placed in office by the occupying forces. Meanwhile, potential political dissidents, journalists, and—most significantly—trade-union leaders and activists were rounded up and thrown into jail.

“The Panama Deception” shows that Endara and his cronies are linked to the drug trade at least as much as Noriega was. Nearly every senior member of the new regime, including Endara himself, were directors of banks that laundered money for the drug runners.

No matter how much you may agree or disagree with the point of view of the filmmakers, one thing can’t be denied. There is a great deal more to be learned about this war than was included in the nightly television “news.”

“The Panama Deception,” in film or video versions, may be ordered from the Empowerment Project, 1653 18th St., Suite #3, Santa Monica, CA. 90404. For further reading, see “The U.S. Invasion of Panama” by the Independent Commission of Inquiry, published by South End Press.

By JOYCE STOLLER

“Feed,” a film produced and directed by Kevin Rafferty and James Ridgeway.

“Feed” is a new documentary about the current crop of presidential candidates. It was filmed as they waited for a cue to begin addressing a TV camera with material that will be fed by satellite to network TV.

The film contains intercepted satellite television “feeds” as well as footage shot during the New Hampshire primary to give viewers a 360 degree look at the men who are running for president.

The entire slate of socially sanctioned candidates (George Bush, Bill Clinton, Jerry Brown, Ross Perot, Pat Buchanan, Paul Tsongas, Bob Kerry, and Tom Harkin) are shown. Not shown are any of the socialist candidates, or even Larry Agran, the most “progressive” of the Democrats, who apparently didn’t merit network coverage.

“Feed” is a behind the scenes look at the private men behind the public personas, stripped of the punditry and pageantry that surround them, waiting to mouth the promises and platitudes that make up electioneering in this country today.

There is Bill (“I didn’t inhale”) Clinton and Jerry (he didn’t exhale) Brown primping in front of the mirror, burnishing up

New film shows the “candidates” sans image

their image for the unseen and invisible millions. “I just want them to look at me and think I could be president,” says Clinton.

There is George Bush in front of his first cash register in New Hampshire. “That’s amazing,” he says of the automatic scanning device. “When are they going to get those everywhere?” Paul Tsongas doesn’t come off too much better. He’s asked by an angry crowd if he knows how much it costs to live nowadays, if he knows how much a gallon of milk costs?

“Uh... \$1.69?” Hoots from the audience. “Where do you buy your milk?” they jeer.

The pomp and pomposity of campaigns are evinced not only by the candidates, but by their followers, hangers-on, and aides-de-camp.

There is Arnold Schwarzenegger, flexing his muscles at a Bush rally, referring to all the Democratic candidates as “girlie-men.”

There is Hillary Clinton, working the street, shaking hands with a homeless drunk, and asking him for his support. He

tells her he has no home, no address, and therefore he can’t vote. Whereupon, Hillary extricates herself from the handshake and climbs into her limousine.

The funniest of the lot is George Bush. The film opens with him behind his desk, waiting for his cue. He waits... and he waits. Every once in a while during the course of the film, the editors cut back to Bush, still waiting, still impassive, still implacable.

At the end of the film, there is George, still waiting, as the credits roll over him, giving new meaning to the term, “sitting president.”

“Feed” is a hilarious look at the “men who would be king.” But it begs the larger question, which is not what is the difference between the public and private personas of the people running for office—but what class do they represent, and whose interests do they serve?

Everyone is nice or not nice, good-looking or not. Reagan was supposed to have been nice too... to his dog. The point is that they represent the teeth of their class, which is chewing all of us up.



Still, the film is a comedy of errors, a cautionary tale about the follies and foibles of the donkeys and the elephants. It can only leave the viewer aghast knowing that one of these men will be president of the United States. ■

Drywall workers uphold fight for jobs with dignity

On June 1, over 4000 drywall workers in Southern California went on strike. These workers, who are mainly immigrants from Mexico, install boards into home building frames at five cents a square foot. This is down from nine cents a decade ago.

The following interview was given to *Socialist Action* reporter David Cooper by Sixto España, a member of the Drywall Workers Strike Committee.

Socialist Action: What demands are you raising in this strike?

Sixto España: The main thing right now is to raise the price of labor, medical insurance, vacation pay, and retirement.

SA: What caused this labor dispute?

SE: We started this strike because the companies started to cut the wages they pay us, and we have no insurance—we have no benefits at all.

SA: What was the wage 10 years ago?

SE: About 10 years ago, we were making 7 1/2 cents a square foot.

SA: I understood it went up to about 9 cents.

SE: Yes, but we didn't sign a contract with the companies.

SA: You weren't unionized at that time, right?

SE: We joined the union because the company was supposed to join the union, too. But they didn't join.

SA: When you approached the employers—or the Drydock Employers Association—did they make any attempt to negotiate with you?

SE: The first time, no, they did not want to negotiate with us. They just said we could work without the union. But they were wrong. They found out there was no labor to do the jobs, to finish the jobs.

SA: Are they negotiating at the present time?

SE: Right now, one of the biggest companies in California is in negotiations with us. But the trick is, they want to pay us just about the same wages we were making before the strike. It's not that much different—just one cent.

SA: And where are the negotiations now?

SE: The negotiations, let's say, are in better condition than before. I mean, they want to make an agreement with us.

SA: Do you think they are being

forced to negotiate with you because there's been such solidarity of the workers?

SE: Yes, that's right. They have to. We have forced them to do it because most of us are on strike, and they need to finish the jobs—the old contracts.

SA: At the present time, is there a lot of solidarity among the drywall workers?

SE: One hundred percent of the group are positive, and we are sure that we can make it.

SA: Who's doing the work now?

SE: Strikebreakers. Scabs.

SA: In your experience, how are the employers using the courts and the police?

SE: Well, they are using the police against us because, let's say, they don't protect you—plus they try to keep strikers far away from the jobs.

SA: In other words, they're protecting the employers?

SE: Yes.

SA: How about the courts? Have they issued injunctions?

SE: Yes. That's because people are trying to talk to the people who are working to stop and join us. When you are hungry, when you lose your control,

then you start to do wrong things. That's what everybody does everywhere in the world.

SA: But I see that the court injunctions haven't discouraged the drywall workers at all because you go right back out to direct actions on the job sites. Would you describe the situation where they arrested 149? I understand they were going to arrest six, and the others said, "You have to arrest us too!"

SE: Well, the main thing about the arrest of the 149 people—it was just to threaten us, to make our organization dissolve. They thought that 100 percent of us were "illegal aliens," so that's why they arrested us. They made up charges that don't exist.

SA: Previous to the strike, did the INS (Immigration and Naturalization Service) bother immigrants from Mexico among the drywall workers?

SE: They used to do that all the time. But now they're doing it to us to try and break the strike.

SA: It isn't having much effect, is it?

SE: Not really, because all of us will stay together, and as far as I know, no one has gone back to Mexico.

SA: Will the building labor unions take you in as union members?

SE: Well yes, sure, they want to. We're waiting for all the companies to sign a contract with the union. Then we'll join a union, too. Right now we are non-union.

SA: Who is helping you now?

SE: We have support from many unions in the United States, Canada, and part of Mexico.

Our readers speak out

Catholicism

Dear editors,

Being a socialist (non-communist) means sharing, communicating, being tolerant—not dogmatic and controlling. American socialists today are being short-sighted and opportunistic. This is something new. The socialist party is Catholic bashing. Catholics, Jews, and Blacks have suffered enough in this country (e.g., the KKK). We do not need to go through that again in another form.

For 100 years, the Catholic Church has fought for civil, human, and economic rights. Capitalists will never forgive or forget the U.S. bishops' pastoral letter on the U.S. economy or the Pope's letters "On Human Work," "Social Concerns of the Church," etc. During the civil rights movement (with Dr. King) priests, bishops, and nuns marched for justice and peace.

But read the March 1992 issue of *Socialist Action*, and you see nothing but negative reporting

concerning Catholics (on pages 2, 4, and 7). Choosing a scapegoat to hide current issues is Reagan's game.

Herbert J. Scism,
Essex, Md.

The editors reply: The articles in question in our March 1992 issue report on the denial of the right of women in Poland, Mexico, and Ireland to choose abortion.

In Poland, the government is attempting to roll back women's rights with the excuse that this would restore what they call "Catholic values." In Mexico, the Church opposes not only legal abortion, but divorce and contraception as well. The position of the Church in Ireland is similar—although our article, as it happens, did not mention the Catholic Church.

Reporting these facts—and affirming our unqualified support for a woman's right to choose—hardly amounts to "Catholic bashing." Socialist Action has always stood for freedom of religion and opposed discrimination in any form.

SWP

Dear editors,

I want to know more about Socialist Action. Are you supporting the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) campaign of James Warren for president and Estelle De Bates for vice president this year?

I read about James P. Cannon in your pamphlet "Toward a Socialist America," by Asher Harer.

It said that the SWP's "sectarian and abstentionist" attitude toward the trade unions and anti-war movement stands in contrast to the SWP under Cannon.

I think this is unfair.

Just recently, Kate Kaku was arrested at the Peoria rally for putting forth socialist ideas, and the SWP did oppose the Persian Gulf War (and is warning of another).

Meanwhile, other "left" groups are supporting liberals.

I think all left groups should

work to build a labor party, or support a workers party that already exists.

Gary McIntire,
St. Paris, Ohio

The editors reply: Socialist Action is giving critical support to the presidential campaign of the Socialist Workers Party. See our lead article on page 1.

For forums, classes and other activities, contact the Socialist Action branch in your area!

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By SHANNON SHEPPARD

Socialist Action has announced an ambitious national fund drive of \$18,000, following a decision by our August National Convention.

Convention delegates voted to raise these funds in order to maintain the high level of political activity that has characterized Socialist Action since our formation nine years ago.

Part of the funds will be allocated to pay for a new series of 12 educational pamphlets to be issued in the coming months.

Subjects include the destruction of the environment, the

Socialist Action launches National Fund Drive

liberation movement in South Africa, the African American liberation struggle, the North American Free Trade Agreement, defending public education, and the fight for women's rights.

Other pamphlets are in the works, including "Art and Revolution," by Mike Alewitz; "The Premature Obituaries of Socialism," by Paul Seigel; "The Philosophy of Marxism," by Cliff Connor; and "Ameri-

can Stalinism in Crisis: The CPUSA/Committees of Correspondence," by Jeff Mackler.

Socialist Action staffwriter Gerry Foley is currently in the former USSR on a six-week visit. The fund drive will help fund this tour, which will include other countries in Eastern Europe. Foley will also author a new pamphlet, which will focus on the state of the socialist opposition and developments in the national

movements.

Socialist Action is also planning national U.S. tours for the fall and spring, including one by *Socialist Action* Co-editor Michael Schreiber, who recently returned from South Africa.

All these projects, as well as our ever-increasing operating expenses, require money. That's where the members, supporters, and friends of Socialist Action enter the picture.

We appeal to you, our readers, to help us build the future socialist society by starting now with your contribution.

Rap music and the elections— Cop killers or killer cops?



Ice-T in Los Angeles



Sister Souljah

By ZBIGNIEW KOWALEWSKI
and SILVERE CHABOT

Just after the Los Angeles uprising, two rappers, a man and a woman, were denounced as instigators of violence. The man was denounced by President Bush and the woman by his challenger, Bill Clinton.

Meanwhile, hardcore rap music—often Afrocentric or Black nationalist—has become a burning subject for the major media. In this manner, rap has surged onto the political scene with even more force than rock music did 25 years ago.

In fact, the campaign against the rappers was initiated at the beginning of this year when many media outlets and politicians, following the lead of moderate Black leaders, denounced the video “By the Time I Get to Arizona” by the group Public Enemy.

In reaction to the invasion of the Persian Gulf by the U.S. military, the leader of the group, Chuck D, had conceived a “revenge fantasy”—turning their own methods against them! Using a scene reconstructing the assassination of Martin Luther King as background, the video shows how the “commando army” of Public Enemy disembarks in Arizona and carries out terrorist actions against the public powers of that state.

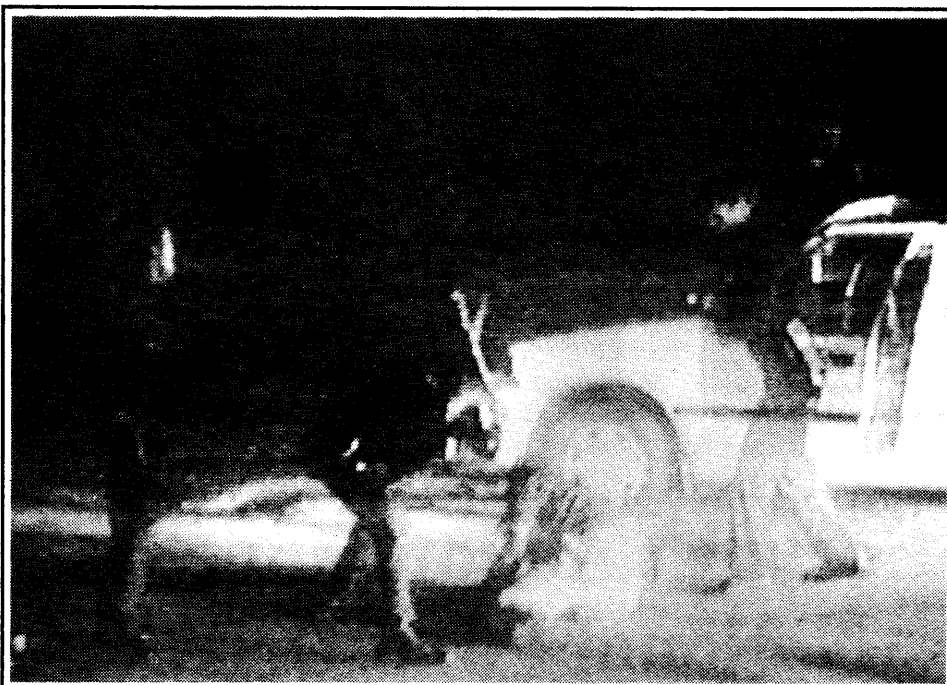
James Bernard, senior editor of *The Source*, the only Black independent revue of rap music and hip-hop culture, expressed satisfaction that finally someone had “undermined the notion that our political system is so fair in representing ‘the people’ that armed rebellion could never be justified.”

“Sick and obscene”

Speaking before the Rainbow Coalition, Bill Clinton accused rapper Sister Souljah of initiating racial violence. *Newsweek* immediately honored Souljah with her photo on the cover and seized the occasion to publish a fat background dossier titled, “Rap and Race: Beyond Sister Souljah—The New Politics of Pop Music.”

Meanwhile, the Republican team—George Bush and Dan Quayle—jumped on rapper Ice-T, denouncing his song “Cop Killer” as “sick” and “obscene,” and alleging that it “glorified killing

“Why did Clinton pick on a little-known rapper, grotesquely twisting her statements in *The Washington Post*? And why did Bush make Ice-T into public enemy number one of American society?”



“Are you going to send some of these killer cops to jail?” —Ice-T.

law-enforcement officers.”

The campaign against Ice-T was launched by the Combined Law Enforcement Associations of Texas. They threatened Time Warner, the company that had produced and distributed the album, with a national boycott of its stores. This was brought up again by 60 members of Congress, New York Gov. Mario Cuomo, and a large part of the media. Oliver North himself called for sedition charges.

Why did Clinton pick on a little-known rapper, grotesquely twisting her statements in *The Washington Post*? And why did Bush make Ice-T into Public Enemy Number One of American society?

Sister Souljah had never called for killing white people, contrary to what Clinton said about her. In *Rolling Stone Magazine*, Clinton’s act is explained as a way for him to maintain some distance from Jesse Jackson and pressure groups inside the Rainbow Coalition. In addition, it gave Clinton a macho look in the eyes of conservative whites. But that explanation doesn’t go quite far enough.

The major reason is simple: It was a classical maneuver aimed at turning public attention away from what Clinton understood about the Los Angeles uprising. As James Bernard said about this method: “We end up debating whether Sister Souljah is a

racist rather than holding those in the White House and corporate America responsible for the destruction of our communities.”

“Tonight we get even”

It’s true that in “Cop Killer,” and in the video that he made, Ice-T speaks as he puts on a black shirt, black gloves, and a ski mask. He sings with the group Body Count: “This shit’s been too long/ I got my 12-gauge sawed off/ I got my headlights turned off/ I’m ’bout to dust some cops off/ Cop killer, it’s better you than me/ Cop killer, fuck police brutality/ Cop killer, I know your family’s grievin’/ Cop killer, but tonight we get even/ ...Fuck the police, for Rodney King/ Fuck the police, for my dead homies/ Fuck the police, for your freedom/ ...Fuck the police, have some muthafuckin’ courage.”

But there was nothing new there since the release, in 1989, of “Fuck the Police” by the group Niggers With Attitude (NWA). At that time, the racket made about that piece was enormous. The FBI attempted to prosecute the group, but was beaten back by defenders of First Amendment rights, which guarantees freedom of expression.

It seemed that words like “fuck the police,” which have become the mode among rappers, had achieved the right to be expressed. But this was clearly no longer the case after the Los Angeles uprising.

In an editorial in *The Source*, Chris Wilder wrote: “Whether it’s gangsta rappers like NWA, political rappers like KRS-One, or militant pro-Black rappers like X-Clan, they all agree that police are the enemy. These artists represent the majority of young, Black America.”

And as the rapper Ice Cube pointed out: This young, Black America, which identifies with rap music, is distinguished from preceding generations by the fact that, more than being ready to die for what is right, it is ready to *kill* for what is right. And there you have the second reason behind the attacks of Bush and Clinton.

“For more than four years before the Los Angeles riots, rap had anticipated the rage that ultimately boiled over on April 29,” wrote John Leland, editor of the dossier published by *Newsweek*. Rap had previewed

(continued on page 7)