

Socialist Worker

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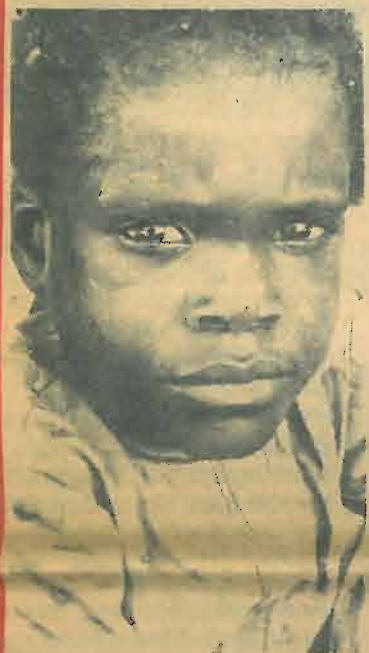


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REAGAN: A GREEN LIGHT TO THE RIGHT

The effects of Reagan's victory in November are already being felt. From Greensboro, North Carolina to the bloody streets of El Salvador, the right wing is emboldened.

American Nazi leader Harold Covington has called the Greensboro verdict "a victory for white people" and predicted more killings.

The butchers of Central and Latin America are overjoyed by the announcements of Reagan's Latin American advisors promising support for military dictatorships and opposition to reform.

ASSASSINATION

There can be no doubt at all that the announced new American policy helped lead to the assassinations of the six moderate and leftist leaders in El Salvador. And the same must be said about the rape and assassination of the four women missionaries, two of them nuns from Cleveland, whose bodies were found in a common grave outside San Salvador.

The right also wants to stop everything from justice for Blacks to affirmative action for the handicapped. The Heritage Foundation, a Washington, D.C., right-wing think tank, recommended to Reagan that tax money for wheel chair ramps and brail in elevators be eliminated.

Reagan himself may sprinkle his cabinet with "moderates" and Tri-lateral types well trusted on Wall Street, but the attacks will still be vicious. And they must be stopped.

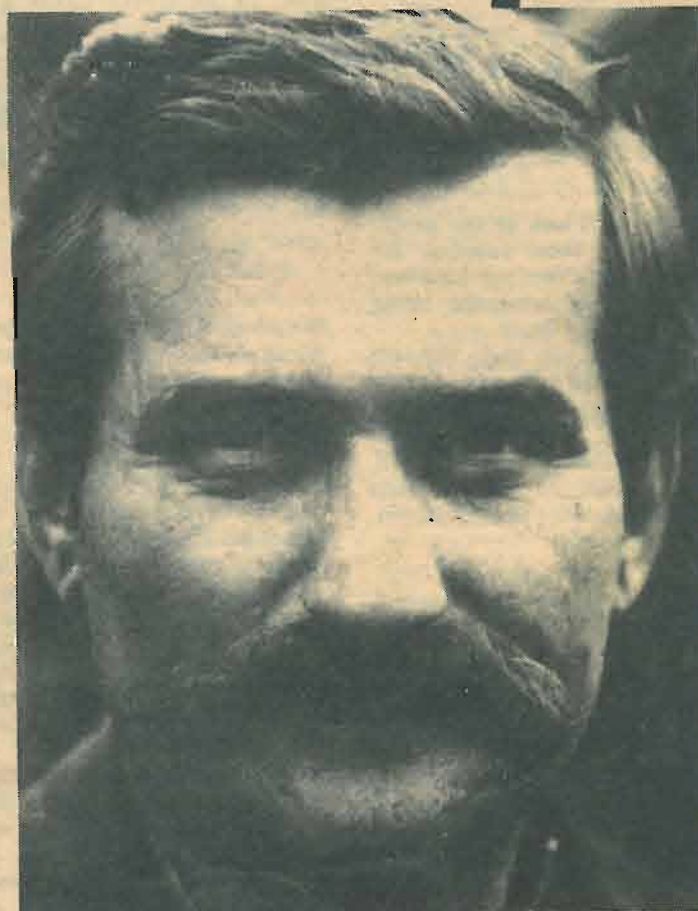
It can be done. Not only was Reagan elected by a mere 26% of the electorate—but the causes that he and the right cherish are opposed by the majority of Americans. A recent Harris Poll, for example, showed that Americans favored affirmative action for Blacks by 68% to 34%.

Our job is to begin to organize that sentiment—to show that the right and the so-called "moral majority" are in fact the minority.

MESSAGE

We can send another message out to the world—there is a real opposition here in the United States. One that stands in solidarity with the workers and oppressed peoples of the world, and one that is working to build socialism right here in the heart of the beast. □

SHOWDOWN IN POLAND



Solidarity's Lech Walesa

Report and analysis on page 2

Poland simmers as Russian threats increase

Nightly now, the American television news raises the spectre of a Russian invasion of Poland. The Polish borders are being sealed. Warsaw Pact maneuvers, conveniently, are occurring right now.

The American media wants us to believe that this is just one more case of workers in the Eastern bloc fighting for "freedom from communism."

Indeed, that is exactly the same picture the Russian press is painting—"anti-socialist elements in Poland."

The invasion of Poland by Russian troops would, of course, be a terrible setback for the workers' movement there—the most significant workers' movement in the East since 1956. But it is clear that the Poles will not roll over and play dead in the face of an occupation; the tradition of Polish independence and the gains already won by the Polish workers make that an impossibility.

Both the American and the Russian presses agree that a

Russian invasion would be a measure of last resort. This is so because if such great use of force backfires, the consequences are incalculable.

But the Polish "problem" will not somehow magically disappear. Their economy is in shambles, with no end in sight.

The Polish government is telling its Western creditors they will need another \$8 million, and fast, just to pay off the interest on outstanding loans. Their hard currency debt is \$21 billion.

And in 1979 the Polish economy shrank by 2%, its first downturn since the Second World War. So capital investment will be cut by 20% next year.

This cut signifies that the leaders of Poland's Communist Party have no hope of solving the economy's problems. Rather, they wish merely to postpone the full impact of them.

TREMORS

The Russian rulers in Moscow are feeling tremors from all through their bloc, and in the U.S. we cannot even be sure how great the tremors are. Reports of strikes are filtering out of Hungary. Street demonstrations in Estonia. The East German leader Honecker is talking of 'anti-socialist forces' at work in Poland, and has sealed off the population from any contact with Poland.

On top of this, Russian agriculture has yet again failed to meet its targets, meaning more food shortages this winter.

In the face of a myriad of problems, Brezhnev is reaching for his guns. He is trying to stabilize that section of the world that is in his sphere of control. He is doing precisely what Ronald Reagan is promising to do in Central America—by any means necessary.

FIGHT

As socialists, we stand unswervingly on the side of the Polish workers against any Russian invasion. In a showdown they will face steep odds, but have made great strides so far. They will fight to preserve what they have won.

There is no socialism in Russia or Eastern Europe.

For Brezhnev, Kania and company the real substance of socialism is replaced with the hollow incantation of phrases. They speak of "Marxism-Leninism" and denounce the Polish workers as "counter-revolutionaries."

But it is in the struggle of the Polish workers that the real meaning of socialism lies. The workers for themselves are striving up to power.

Lenin's picture hangs on the wall of the Central Committee in Warsaw. The workers threaten to obliterate this charade. All power to them. □

by GLENN PERUSEK

THE SPIRIT OF RESISTANCE IS ALIVE AND WELL



Dissidents Bratkowski and Kuron meet with students

The arrest of two printers last week for leaking a document from the Polish Prosecutor's General's office, almost brought the factories in the Warsaw region out on a general strike.

The Ursus tractor factory helped coordinate an area wide solidarity movement that finally secured their release.

And now we learn that the Russians are closing the borders surrounding Poland, and ominously strengthening their military presence.

ABUSES

The new union is now pressing for a Parliamentary commission to investigate abuses of power by the security apparatus, publication of the secret report on the suppression of the strikers in Gdansk ten years ago, and the cut back in the interior ministry's budget.

At the heart of the conflict and repeated skirmishes facing the regime over recent weeks is whether to work with Solidarity or against them.

Stanislaw Kania and other reformists are making a bid to rally the shattered authority of the Communist Party at the same time as trying to isolate the dissident intellectuals group, KOR, which they accuse of trying to take over Solidarity.

Kania has at least three major reasons for such an approach.

Firstly, the scale of support possessed by Solidarity, including many rank and file party members, is of growing concern.

There are sporadic strikes erupting across the country, production is falling everywhere, discipline in the factories has crumbled and workers are continually stopping work to hold meetings.

And secondly, Kania is desperate to incorporate

Solidarity's leaders into a social contract partnership to assist in plans for dealing with an economy which is groaning under a massive foreign debt, suffering severe shortages and declining growth.

Many of the hard-liners in the Communist Party who have been urging constraint from the unions fear for their political future.

This group number well over 200,000 and it is their past arrogance and incompetence and corruption which Solidarity has been coming to grips with recently.

The Politburo, the top policy making organ of the Communist Party, is seriously divided between those who think the party needs to be reformed to survive as the leading authority, and those who cling to the familiar methods of ruthless discipline backed up by the all pervading security organization.

A rather similar problem exists within Solidarity itself. Lech Walesa's plea for an end to guerilla tactics highlights the union's dilemma.

Despite extortions for moderation from Walesa, the Church and even the KOR radicals, many rank and file Solidarity members argue that the only language the authorities understand is force and only constant pressure brings results.

ORGANIZE

Since the summer revolution a massive gap and argument is flourishing.

It is inevitable that the Polish regime, by one means or another, will attempt to reassert its control, and in the process try to reassure the Kremlin.

Yet the last few weeks have amply demonstrated that the Polish workers' spirit of resistance has not died down.



Piotr Sapelo and Jan Narozniak, the two workers jailed by the Polish government and released after the workers threatened a general strike

WHAT THE RULING CLASS MEANS BY PEACE

When you look at the people who have been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, you get a very good idea of what the ruling class means by Peace.

There are two quite different types of Peace prize winners. The first includes people like Henry Kissinger, Menachem Begin, General George C. Marshall, Willy Brandt, Anwar Sadat, and US vice president Charles Dawes. Warmongers all.

WHITE

They are awarded the peace prize because they have been able to "pacify" (that is, kill off) the enemies of US imperialism. It was probably this group of prize winners that prompted a former director of the Nobel Institute, Tim Creve, to remark that in order to win the Nobel Peace Prize, it helps to be "a white man in his 60s for a country friendly to Norway."

But there is a second group of prize winners, into which this year's winner (Adolfo Perez

by NEIL SMITH

Esquivel of Argentina) fits perfectly. This group includes mother Teresa of Calcutta, Martin Luther King, Mairead Corrigan and Betty Williams of Belfast.

They are not warmongering leaders of the ruling class but peace preaching misleaders of the working class. The ruling class rules by violence—in the factories, in the streets, in its wars. It isn't going to give up its right to exploit and oppress without a fight. No wonder it gives prizes to those who can keep the working class peaceful.

If this sounds cynical or unfair, just remember that Alfred Nobel who donated the peace prize was the inventor of dynamite.

For Soweto to Buenos Aires, Miami to the Middle East, the working class will have peace only when the working class controls society. □

Stop the racist Klan!

The acquittal by an all-white jury of the six members of the Ku Klux Klan who murdered five anti-fascist demonstrators a year ago November in Greensboro, NC, is an abomination.

More than anything else the verdict says in effect that racists need not fear justice—they have been given a green light to commit any kind of crime imaginable against Blacks.

So much for the "New South"—it's back to all-white juries with no apologies, open

collaboration between the Klan, the police and the courts. But it's not just in the South, though there is no doubt that the Klan will continue to be strongest there.

VERDICT

The verdict encourages racists, fanatics, pathological killers everywhere, North and South. And it does this at a time when the people who kill Black children in Atlanta are still free. As are the ghouls who tear the hearts from their Black victims in Buffalo. And

the killers in New Orleans, Indianapolis, the list goes on...

As the National Lawyers Guild has pointed out, today the Klan and Nazis "are allowed to operate above the law and to engage in violent terrorist attacks. This acquittal condones and encourages a perpetuation of these activities."

There have been protests in nearly every part of the country, but especially in the South, led by Black students. All these must be supported, as must the anti-Klan conferences set for Greensboro on December 6 and National Anti-Klan Network's meeting set for January.

CAMPAIGN

Dr. George Simkins, the president of the Greensboro NAACP told a rally there that the verdict was part of a campaign "to turn back the tide of civil rights."

"We are here to put



Greensboro and the nation on notice," he said, "that we can't let this happen. We intend to hold on to what we have and fight like hell to keep it."

ANSWER

We agree. We have to fight back everywhere—that is the only answer to the racists and

the new right. They must all be stopped.

And so must the system that spawns them. American capitalism was built with the blood of millions of Black slaves and now it is nurtured with racism and racist exploitation. It is racist in every detail. It all has to go. □

THREE GAYS KILLED IN NEW YORK ATTACK

Wednesday night, November 19, a man fired into two gay bars with a machine gun.

He killed three men and injured five. The murderer was Ronald Crumpley, an ex-transit cop and the son of a minister.

He was chased and caught by the F.B.I. who had been tailing him for stealing a gun, but waited until Crumpley had killed three men to arrest him.

At the time of the shooting, Crumpley yelled, "Homosexuals are the cause of all our problems."

SENSATIONALISM

The *New York Post* and *Daily News* played up on the sensationalism of the murder without ever questioning what lay behind the murder. For them it was enough that a gay man had said that he was Crumpley's lover, and had broken up with him because he was crazy.

There was a demonstration the next evening of 2,000 lesbians and gays who marched from Sheridan square to the site of the murders and back.

While the band played the Battle Hymn of the Republic, and the organizers called for awareness of violence against lesbians and gays, and for more police protection, many in the crowd disagreed.

by ALLYSON SMITH

There were militant chants and a general feeling that what was needed was not a funeral march.

As for more police protection, Crumpley was an ex-cop, as was the killer of Harvey Milk in San Francisco.

The function of cops in the Village is not to protect, but to harass lesbians and gays.

The march went back to Sheridan square where over 500 took to the streets and blocked traffic for 15 minutes, until the police forcibly removed them.

The demonstrators blocked 7th Avenue because they were angry.

Murders and beatings of lesbians and gays have increased over the past few years, brought on by movies like "Cruising", TV shows like the CBS Special Report, "Gay Power, Gay Politics," and the release of murderers of gays like Dan White.

FORCE

The demonstration ended with the protestors being forced off the street because there was no other focus nearby. The next time it won't end as easily. □

The purge trials won't work

"History repeats itself," wrote Karl Marx, "first as tragedy and then as farce."

The bloody Moscow purge trials of the 1930's marked the elimination of the last vestiges of the successful workers' revolution of November, 1917.

Almost all the leaders of the revolution, the Old Bolsheviks, were killed, many of them, tragically, after they testified against themselves, in nightmarish trials that severed any connection between the new leaders of Stalin's Russia and the cause of socialism and freedom.

CHINA

Now there are purge trials in China. But these have nothing to do with socialism, in any sense, nor do any of the parties involved—prosecutors or defendants.

They are pure farce. The Gang of Four, led by Jiang

Qing, the wife of Mao, is accused of framing and persecuting 3 to 400,000 people (of whom 16,000 died) as well as abusing 80,000 members of the armed forces; of plotting rebellion by arming 33,500 militia men, of slander, subversion and just about anything that comes to mind.

Jiang Qing, who first professed innocence, has now conceded her guilt—in true Moscow fashion.

Chen Boda, a leading general implicated in the alleged plot to kill Mao in 1972, has also confessed his guilt.

Just one thing bothers him. "I do not disagree with the sentence of death," he says. "But I think death before a firing squad might not be severe enough. Maybe it would be better to chop off my head."

All this of course is nonsense. The real problem in China is the massive economic crisis of the country—a crisis not solved by the zigs and zags of Chinese economic policy whether under Mao or his enemies. Foreign debts, poor harvests, inflation, foodstuffs in short supply—that is the reality for China.

Blaming everything on the Gang of Four will solve none of these.

TWIST

The Chinese people have put up with the fantasies of their ruling class for years, years of exploitation and poverty. And now, as in every twist, they are once again

called upon to work even harder—for next to nothing.

It is difficult to believe that the Chinese people will be fooled indefinitely. Whether it is the Gang of Four or Deng and his henchmen, it makes little difference. And it certainly has nothing at all to do with communism or socialism.

REBEL

Last year, the most famous rebel of recent years, Wei Jingsheng, was sentenced to fifteen years in jail. Before he disappeared he had this to say on his giant posters:

"According to the Marxist theoreticians, under socialism, the masses hold all political power. Go and ask the Chinese workers:

"Apart from the wretched pay which you are given every month, just to prevent you from starving, what rights do you have? What power do you have? Whose masters are you? Alas, you can control nothing—not even your own marriage." □

FIGHTING WORDS

"We say, number one, that the Black struggle, the independent Black struggle, has a vitality and a validity of its own; that it has deep historic roots in the past of America and in present struggles; it has an organic political perspective, along which it is travelling, to one degree or another, and everything shows that at the present time it is travelling with great speed and vigor.

"We say, number two, that this independent Black movement is able to intervene with terrific force upon the general social and political life of the nation, despite the fact that it is waged under the banner of democratic rights, and is not led necessarily either by the organized labor movement or the marxist party.

"We say, number three, and this is the most important, that it is able to exercise a powerful influence upon the revolutionary proletariat, that it has got a great contribution to make in the development of the proletariat in the United States, and that it is in itself a constituent part of the struggle for socialism."

C.L.R. James

The Revolutionary Answer to the Black Problem, 1948

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Graffiti

by PATRICIA GOLDSMITH

As stone from wheat . . .

Mother Jones, the great leader of the miners at the turn of the century, was honored in November at West Virginia's Science and Cultural Center in Charleston.

In her autobiography, Mother Jones recounted her meeting with her great nemesis John Rockefeller when she attempted to appeal to him on behalf of the striking Colorado miners.

"John Rockefeller is a nice young man, but when we went away from the office where resides the silent government of thousands and thousands of people, we went away with the feeling that he could not possibly understand the aspirations of the working class. He was as alien as is one species from another, as alien as stone is from wheat."

This year the West Virginia Labor History Association honored Mother Jones at the "Mother Jones and the miners festival" with a plaque. The plaque was accepted by the State of West Virginia by Jay Rockefeller—John D's great great grandson. □

Quote of the month . . .

Police Commissioner Donald D. Pomerleau of Baltimore on the witness stand in U.S. District Court in a case over sex and race discrimination in the Baltimore Police Department: "All women are little balls of fluff in the eyes of the Creator. It's an endearing term, a term I would use to describe my wife." □

Only teasing . . .

Bailey Smith, president of the Southern Baptist Convention was not content asserting that god does not hear the prayer of a Jew because Jews don't accept Jesus as the Messiah.

He now insists he was only "teasing" when he said in his sermon that "Jews got funny looking noses."

"There are some people with whom god works more intimately than others. Why, you say? I don't know. Why did he choose the Jews? I don't know why he chose the Jews. I think they got funny looking noses, myself." □

Don't flaunt it . . .

And Anita Bryant claims to have eased her stand on homosexuals.

"I'm more inclined to say live and let live." But of course gays can't say they're gay. "Just don't flaunt it or try to legalize it." Real liberal. □

STRIKING TEACHERS CHARGE: "EDUCATION DEAD IN RAVENNA"

RAVENNA, OH—Public school teachers here went on strike November 12. The teachers have been without a contract since January.

Their demand is for a 9.8% increase in wages. The Ravenna Board of Education countered with a 2% offer and said they wouldn't bargain.

"The good faith bargaining on the teachers part was seen as a sign of weakness by the Board," said striker Gene Roloff.

The teachers had adopted a wait and see outlook centering

by SKIP HOLLAND and LINDA BYRKET

on a November 4 school tax levy. The levy didn't pass and a week later the teachers went on strike.

Now 93% of the 230 Ravenna teachers are on strike. Attendance in the schools has been low, and community support has been strong. The Board has been unwilling to back down.

The pickets have been harassed by the police: three teachers were arrested on

charges of disorderly conduct for nothing more than walking down a sidewalk.

MAYOR

Meanwhile, the mayor of Ravenna denied a parade permit to the strikers. Both the striking teachers and involved community members say they are getting quite an education from the actions of the Board and Ravenna City Hall's complicity with it.

However, spirit remains high on the picket lines. A strong sense of comradery has developed. Fired on, perhaps, by their disgust with scabs (who are being paid \$70 a day by the Board) and despite the parade permit denial, the teachers held a mock funeral procession on November 25. It concluded with a moment of silence for the scabs. The teachers then burned a coffin marked "Education is dead in Ravenna." □

TALKING ABOUT SOCIALISM

"What is it about Christmas that makes people so unhappy?"

The holiday season is settling over the country again with its yearly round of buying, drinking, eating, decorating—and borrowing money to finance all these.

Having given up many "non-essentials" with the deepening economic crisis, people still try to find money for Christmas—if it can be found anywhere.

But for many people, it can't. And at the same time, more people suffer severe depression, requiring hospitalization, during the month of December than any other time in the year. And more people commit suicide. What is it about Christmas that makes people so unhappy? And why do they keep trying to make it work?

The contradictions of capitalism, and its cruelty are never more apparent than at this time of the year. These contradictions take their toll on all of us, all year round, but at Christmas they break hearts.

DEPRIVES

The inequality of the system deprives ordinary people the simple pleasure of making their children happy, of being generous without worrying about money, of sharing and celebration. The best things in life may be free, but this year Christmas trees start around \$15.

Everything the holiday is supposed to be about—love, sharing, children, beauty, celebration—is blocked by the economic system that we live in.

A friend of mine works at the Welfare Department. Every Christmas a charitable agency gives him two \$25 vouchers for toys, which he is supposed to award to the "most deserving" families on his caseload of 50.

The welfare mothers know about the vouchers and in the first week of December my



friend begins getting phone calls from them—with each mother explaining desperately how much more "deserving" she is than her neighbors. These women are forced to cut each other down simply because they love their kids and want to give them something.

Almost one hundred years ago, Eleanor Marx wrote to her sister Laura: "Christmas! Oh, Laura, those awful festivities—becoming more and more terrible as one has less and less heart for them."

But there's more to it than that. The reason Christmas puts so much pressure on people is because they want the people they love to be happy, they want to share, to celebrate, to make things beautiful. The system gives them only on time a year to do that—and then won't let them take part in the festival without the price of admission.

All holidays speak in one way or another to this human need for celebration. Two socialist holidays come to mind—International Women's Day on March 8 and May Day.

As small as our movement is today, we celebrate these two days every year with songs, food, and rousing speeches, and a spirit of comradeship and hope for the future. Holidays like these celebrate the past and point to the way forward at the same time.

ESSENTIAL

But even a holiday riddled with the contradictions as Christmas, can teach us something. Peoples desire for love, laughter, plenty, generosity, and camaraderie is so great and so thwarted by capitalism that they try to cram it all into this one celebration.

We should see these desires for what they are and take

heart from them. They are essential to the fight for socialism, the very heart of our movement.

Eleanor Marx loved to organize plays and parties for children and she took the initiative in organizing a Christmas tree party for the children of Socialist League members. She wrote:

"The origin of the Christmas festival was the beautiful old pagan feast that celebrated the birth of light, the Winter Solstice.

"Is not Socialism the real new birth and with its light will not the old darkness of the earth disappear? We cannot too soon make the children understand that *Socialism means happiness.*"

Try to be happy and make merry this Christmas, and prepare for the year ahead—for the continuing fight to make a world where people won't have to try so hard to be happy. □



WORLD IN STRUGGLE

VICTORY FOR BRITISH MACHINISTS

The 2,400 workers at Gardners Diesel Engine factory in Manchester, England voted unanimously on November 25 to return to work. Their seven week sit-in against compulsory lay-offs has ended in a victory which is a tribute to both their own defiance and the fantastic support they received from the rest of the trade union movement.

Before the strike began, the employers had demanded 700 compulsory lay-offs in both staff and manual divisions. In addition they declared their intention to impose a new bonus scheme for piecework, impose a 5% wage increase and impose restrictions on shop stewards' activities.

DISPUTE

The figure for the mandatory lay-offs was reduced to 590 by the time the strike began but, during the dispute, letters were sent to workers naming those who were to be fired—which just happened to include the convenor and many of the leading shop stewards.

The settlement which has been reached means there will be:

- No compulsory lay-offs. The company hopes that, in consultation with the unions, they might be able to reduce the workforce through early retirement, natural wastage and voluntaries, from 2,400 to 2,075. But if that target is not reached, the policy of short time working and work sharing will be implemented.
- No firings of leading stewards or convenors.
- No new bonus system.
- No unilateral wage 'deal'.

The importance of 'mutuality' has been preserved on all aspects of the company's original demands. Any problems which arise will be raised at meetings attended by reps from all unions with the option to co-opt any shop steward who faces particular difficulties.

HIGH

The workers will go back with heads held high and the threat of spending Christmas on unemployment gone. And the fact that there are many more militants inside the plant now at both the staff and shop floor levels should limit the company's ability to rat on any agreement.

However, there is no doubt that the bosses will be back sooner or later. The best defense against them is to maintain an active, informed membership inside the factory and see a few more victories along the same lines from the rest of us. □

El Salvador: At the center of the storm

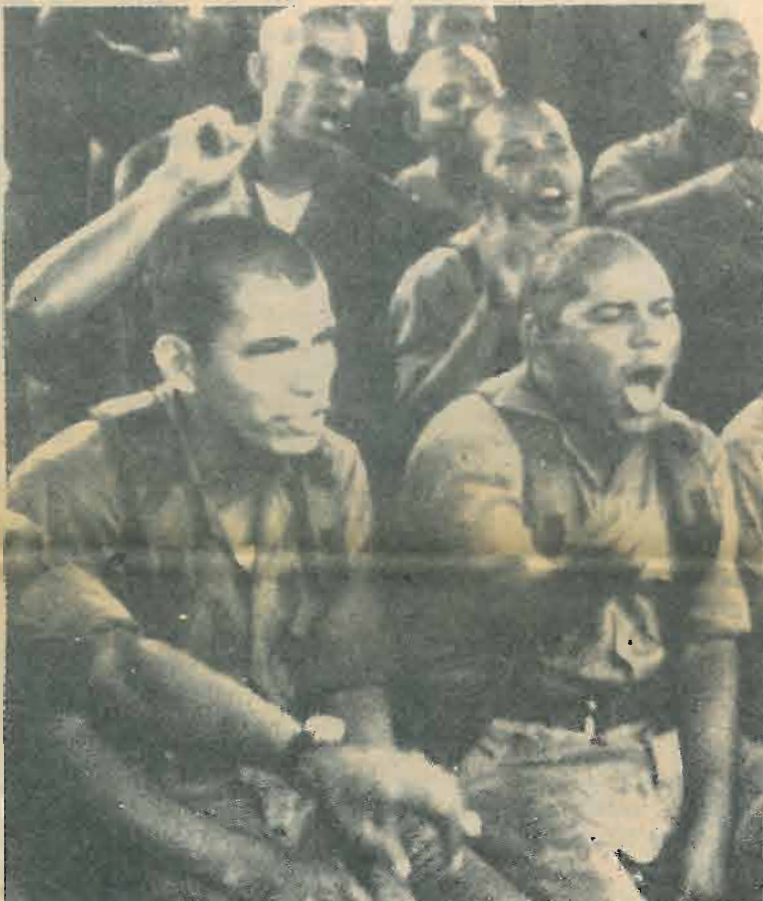
In the past year El Salvador has been the focus of the revolutionary struggle in Central America.

In what amounts to an undeclared civil war, nearly 10,000 people have been killed this year, mostly by the military and right-wing terror squads.

On November 27, six leaders of the Democratic Revolutionary Front, a broad alliance of leftist and moderate organizations, were abducted and assassinated. A right-wing paramilitary group took responsibility for the killings.

At the same time Reagan has announced a policy favoring the right-wing regimes in Central and Latin America, and many Salvadoreans believe that the latest killings are connected with Reagan's election and his promised anti-communist policies.

In this article Neil Seally examines the recent history of the struggle in El Salvador.



Ex-dictator Somoza's bloody National Guard

20,000 MARCH FOR IRISH PRISONERS

The Hunger Strike Campaign was brought to the gates of the Irish Parliament in late November as 20,000 militant protestors brought the city of Dublin to a standstill.

The marchers chanting slogans and burning union jacks (the British flag) took one and a half hours to pass.

They demanded the Irish government end their security cooperation with the British if the H-Block demands are not met.

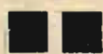
Bernadette Devlin McAliskey warned Margaret Thatcher that "history has a habit of repeating itself" as she compared the hunger strike to the 1916 executions which sparked the flame leading to freedom for 26 counties of Ireland.

The march was an impressive show of northern force brought to the south. Northerners realize that the key to the victory or defeat of the Hunger Strike lies in mobilizing action in the south of Ireland. It was southern and

trade union representation which was seriously lacking on the march.

There was solid support from traditional republican areas, but support from Dublin was weak. Although there were workers on the march like 'Teachers against the H-Block,' 'co-operative workers against the H-Block' and 'CIE workers against the H-Block,' there was only one official union banner—the Postal Workers.

The day after the march another 2,000 marched through Crossmaglen near the border. □



On December 1, three women joined the hunger strike by prisoners in Northern Ireland demanding that the British Government grant them political status. The three are inmates of the women's jail in the town of Armagh.

On October 15, 1979 a group of military officers overthrew the brutal dictatorship of General Carlos Humberto Romero in El Salvador. The new ruling junta included many liberal minded civilians.

The United States greeted the coup with warm approval and praised the government for being "moderate and centrist"—an alternative to the Sandinistas in Nicaragua. The new junta pledged its support to a platform of much needed reforms including a major redistribution of the land.

SKEPTICAL

The majority of Salvadoreans were skeptical of the junta's promises. Years of oppression had taught them to distrust the bourgeoisie and its ally, the military. The spring and summer of 1979 saw a renewed militancy in the peasants and workers of El Salvador — trade unions and guerilla groups had increased their membership and level of activity.

The October coup was an attempt to forestall revolution. By January it was clear that reform was impossible in El Salvador. The civilian members of the junta and virtually the entire cabinet had resigned. Violent repression far surpassed even the excesses of the Romero regime.

A second junta was formed consisting of the military and the Christian Democratic Party, but even this coalition collapsed when the entire left wing of the Christian Democrats split from the party.

In April leftist organizations and trade unions combined forces with dissatisfied members of the middle classes to form the Revolutionary Democratic Front (FDR). Full scale revolution had erupted in El Salvador.

The State Department and news media would have us believe that violence in El Salvador is the result of fighting between "extremists on the left and extremists on the right." Many sources, including the Archdiocese of San Salvador, paint a different picture.

GUARD

The majority of the almost 10,000 dead are victims of the National Guard, the army and anti-communist death squads who kill men, women and children indiscriminately. The junta has no popular support; it is the enemy of the Salvadorean people.

But the junta has many friends in Washington. Many suspect that Uncle Sam had more than a hand in the

October coup; in September 1979 William Bowdler, Assistant Secretary for Inter-American Affairs, flew to San Salvador to urge Romero to resign.

No other regime in the history of El Salvador has received more encouragement and aid from the U.S. Since November 1979 the U.S. has sent \$6.7 million in military assistance to the junta with another \$5.5 million reprogrammed for fiscal year 1981. U.S. AID has granted \$87 million in "economic" aid to the present government.

300 officers are being trained in counterinsurgency techniques in the Canal Zone. U.S. advisors have already been sent to El Salvador; many have been spotted directing military maneuvers and massacres of peasants.

The land reform of the junta (initiated March, 1980) is actually the brain child of a law professor at the University of Washington named Roy Prosterman. Prosterman was the author of the "Land to the Tiller" program in Viet Nam which cost the lives of about 30,000 Vietnamese.

"REFORM"

The land reform in El Salvador has had much the same effect — troops have occupied the haciendas and used them as bases for counterinsurgency operations. Naturally only 2% of the coffee plantations were touched by the "reform."

Most likely U.S. troops will not be sent to El Salvador. Carter and his successor will pursue a policy of "Vietnamization" in Central America. Guatemalan and Honduran troops as well as right wing Cubans and Somoza's old Guardia Nacional will be used to stop the spread of revolution. They will be armed and trained by the U.S. and its allies such as Israel, West Germany and Venezuela.

The people of El Salvador are among the most impoverished in all of Latin America. Only 16% of the employable work force can find jobs which last the whole year around. One out of four children dies before the age of five; the average life-span is 46 years. Most Salvadoreans receive only 1900 of the 3500 calories necessary to sustain life.

WEALTH

This contrasts with the wealth of the 2% who own 60% of all arable land and with the handsome profits of industrialists and businessmen. □

REAGAN'S ECONOMIC PLAN: HOW BAD WILL IT BE?

Jimmy Carter was voted out on economics. Ronald Reagan's challenge "Ask yourself if you are better off now than four years ago" won him the Cleveland debate and put him in the oval office.

But before Reagan and George Bush got together as the Republican team, Bush charged Reagan with pushing "voodoo economics." Is it really going to be that bad?

TAXES

The center-piece of Reagan economics is the Kemp-Roth tax cut proposal: a 10% cut in personal income tax rates for everybody for each of the next three years. This would be a massive give-away to the rich. Just consider that if you are now paying \$1 million in federal income taxes based on the highest tax rate of 70%, you could cut your taxes by a quarter of a million after the three years since your rate would then only be 51%, having dropped to 63% after the first and 57% after the second year.

By contrast, if you are now paying \$5,000 in federal income taxes based on the lower rate of 20% you could cut your taxes by only \$1,250 after the three years since your rate would then have dropped to 15%, having dropped to 18% after the first and 16% after the second year.

Reagan and his economists see the tax cuts for the rich as a key element in getting back to economic growth in productive enterprises. This is the "supply-side" aspect of the tax cut proposal: give the investors a break and they will invest.

The old-fashioned liberal "demand-side" economics would hold that more money should be put in the pockets of the consumer whose demand for products would then revitalize industry.

NIPSCO strike in seventh month

MICHIGAN CITY, IN—4,100 linemen, electricians, mechanics and other workers are now in the seventh month of a bitter struggle with the Northern Indiana Public Service Company (NIPSCO).

The company's intention, according to many workers, is simple—break the union. There are no talks taking place whatsoever.

OFFER

The workers are members of the United Steel Workers (USW) local 12775. They went into negotiations hoping for a raise and some improvements in cost-of-living. Instead they got an offer that would have eaten into benefits gained over the past twenty years.

There is anger among the workers. One striker explained to *Socialist Worker*:

"talize industry. Long term economic stagnation is resistant to demand-side measures such as easing credit, increasing welfare spending, and increasing tax deductions for dependents. What can be expected from supply-side economics?"

The Kemp-Roth tax cut proposal is only part of Reaganomics. Since Nixon's 1971 enactment of accelerated depreciation and an investment tax credit, there has been a continuous chain of pro-capital tax measures. Corporate tax rates have been lowered as have capital gains taxes. Reagan will of course try to speed up these pro-capital tax measures, and Carter would have made them the focus of his reindustrialization program.

WASTE

The tragic thing about the whole program is the waste involved. It is a matter of throwing capital that could be used to improve the lives of people to the wind. Even the most distinguished Republican economists think there is something irresponsible about supply-side economics.

When a sense of irresponsibility becomes more widespread, Reagan will have no choice but to trim his sails and muddle through the next four years of stagnation in the manner of his predecessors.

The question is where are the capitalists going to put the money that they will be awash with.

Just for kicks take ten minutes out and drop in on the

"There are people losing their houses, losing everything."

And the bitterness is not directed just at the company. The courts have issued injunctions limiting picketing, allowing Teamsters, boiler-makers and management to cross the strikers' picket lines and maintain service.

The union negotiating committee is standing fast, but many workers are near to losing faith, for the union appears to have no strategy at all to win the strike, yet the sacrifices the workers are making are enormous.

The strike is expected to last well through the holidays, so it will be a difficult time for the NIPSCO strikers and their families.

They should be supported. If their union is broken, others will surely follow. □

NOTES ON THE ECONOMIC CRISIS BY MILT FISK

nearest brokerage. Let the receptionist know that you have \$1 million working its way through the courts from an inheritance. When you get swept into an office, see what kind of response you get upon asking if you should invest in auto, steel, coal, rubber, glass, utilities or electronics... Productive industry in America is not a good bet!

Money Reagan wants to give the capitalists will go overseas in loans and investments and it will go into speculation in the money market. There will also be numerous other speculations based on increased luxury spending by the rich.

INFLATIONARY

Not only will industry fail to be revitalized, but also those of us who would get the smaller benefit from the tax cut will be hurt. Money going everywhere but productive industry is an inflationary affair.

The needed technological improvements in industry do not get made—more has to be produced without significantly increased capacity and at a greater cost than with improved technology. Capitalists will not invest when and where human needs call for investments—they will not invest now in productive America because they can get more in speculation and overseas investment.

When supply-side economics can't get the political support Reagan needs for it, the new administration in Washington will still have a trick up its sleeve. It will sit on labor.

Reindustrialization will then mean increasing exploitation. Davis-Bacon will be repealed, with the wages of all construction workers thereby threatened. Legislation is already in the hopper to weaken OSHA. Inflation will continue to keep the real cost of labor from going up. Union busting will have a field day—while the judges look the other way. The minimum wage for teenagers will be dropped, with older workers being thrown off the job.

EDGE

The class struggle will gain for the capitalists what they are unwilling to try to gain by investment. The rightward drift has given them the edge in the class struggle for the moment.

Changing this is now the task of working and oppressed people, for it is not by refuting voodoo economics but by winning the class struggle that workers and the oppressed will get out of this mess. □

"A STRIKE FREED"

On November 21-23, the National, Black Independent Political Party (NBIPP) held its founding convention in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Over 1300 delegates attended from 27 states—thought the overwhelming majority came from Pennsylvania, New York, Washington D.C., Maryland and Ohio.

They were mad as hell and determined to do something about it.

They came from the colleges, the grass roots organizations, the cultural groups and the church societies.

PARTY

They filled the huge auditorium and spilled over into the corridors. They met from 8 in the morning to 12 at night. They skipped lunch and forgot dinner. They had a goal in mind—form a national Black political party that would actually fight for the needs of Black Americans.

The decision to launch an independent Black party was made last August in New Orleans, at the fourth annual convention of the National Black Political Assembly.

The party's purpose, according to one of its satelements, is to "improve the living conditions of the peoples of African descent in the U.S."

LIBERATION

To struggle for the "total liberation of the masses of Black people from the oppressive condition of racism and economic exploitation and genocide."

"To struggle for fundamental social change designed to create a new social order, to eradicate hunger, poverty, and disease and all those ills which cripple the human spirit."

Many of the speakers at the convention stressed that the party would not simply be an electoral party.

The need for a Black political party arose from the fact that neither Republican nor Democratic parties have, will or can, struggle for the needs and interests of Black people.

Manning Marable, a member of the NBIPP organizing committee, summed it up: "The character of American politics is bankrupt today, not because we have the wrong people at the top, but because the system itself is fundamentally bankrupt."

The party will try to build local chapters and become a force in Black communities across the country—to get involved in the day to day struggles of Black people.

The main topic of discussion at the convention was the

proposed charter and nature of the new party. Ho discussion in state ca preceded plenary sessio

Most of the delegates young and a spirit of e rance dominated the co tion. The convention several inspiring ke speakers. And on more one occasion the pi sessions broke into cha "We're Fired Up!"



Manning Marable

Speaker after speaker up amidst thunderou plause and denounce dead-end strategies o Democratic and Repu parties.

They criticized Black ers that have failed to or in the communities to fi jobs, quality educatio Black children and an police brutality and violence, but rather sought their own self-ad ment in the democratic p

CHALLENGE

The main emphasis speakers was to take u challenge of the '80s. stressed that a Black should demand an e police brutality and Naz terror.

The recent killings of men in Buffalo, New the kidnapping and m of Black children in A the murders of am demonstrators in Green N.C. by Klansmen N.C. by Klansmen an ncles of organized rac the rise. The police sho of Black men in New O Indiana and Miami ar further attacks on the communities.

When James Turner, man of the African s department at Cornel veristy, spoke of the n oppose the reinstitutio draft the audience gav a standing ovation. The of the draft along wi position to the present f policy was a number or

UGGLE FOR TOTAL

DM"

RETHA HILL AND AHMED SHAWKI REPORT ON A NEW BLACK POLITICAL PARTY

cern of the young audience.

But the convention also ran into problems.

A major debate broke out on the convention floor over the proposed charter. By midnight Saturday, nothing had been resolved and the session was clearly over.

The last day of the convention was spent in working out a compromise—the charter was tentatively accepted, to be binding until the first Party Congress in July or August 1981. No national officers were elected and many issues were clearly unresolved.

The debate over the charter highlighted an important weakness of the NBIPP.

Other than agreement on the need for Black independent political action there seemed to be little discussion or agreement of what that will mean in practice.

PITFALL

Although convention Speakers denounced both the Republican and Democratic parties, work and support of local Black Democrats was by no means ruled out. Moreover, the pitfalls of an electoral strategy—even if complemented with day to day organizing—are great.

The predecessor to the National Black Political Assembly was the Black convention of 1972, held in Gary, Indiana. Its attempts to chart an independent and radical course for Black politics failed. The founding of the NBIPP is an attempt to start anew.

But the vagueness on elections, implementation, on the attitude to individual Black Democrats, also highlight the most important difficulty that faces the NBIPP.

The NBIPP has no clear program—no clear, united political world outlook.

And it is a party, which as of now, has no mass base.

Without either a mass base or a clear political program, the NBIPP will find it difficult to remain truly independent force—not to speak of a force capable of significantly challenging American capitalism.

BEGINNING

But despite its problems, the NBIPP has begun the process of building an independent Black Party. There is clearly a need to build an alternative to the Democrats and Republicans. A genuinely independent Black party can begin rebuilding a fight-back, a radical current in American politics.

The task is to take the spirit of the convention back to the workplaces, the communities, the schools, around the country—by any means necessary. □



Rev. Ben Chavis has been active in the Black liberation movement for over a decade.

In 1971, he and nine others were framed on trumped-up charges of conspiracy and firebombing. They have since been released on appeal. The case is still pending, and a decision is to be announced before Christmas.

At the National Black Political Assembly convention held in August, Chavis moved that the Assembly take steps to establish an independent Black political party within 100 days.

At the founding convention of the National Black Independent Political Party, *Socialist Worker* spoke to Ben Chavis on the need for a Black party.

"We do not have a national Black political party and we've needed one for a long time. I think the formation of this party is a historic need, a historic necessity.

"Certainly at the ground stage there are some imperfections, but as we struggle we will work those out.

"The significant thing is that brothers and sisters—from different ideological perspectives, from different organizations—have come to this place.

"See, I was here twelve years ago in this same room, this same place, and the Black Power convention was held right here. The 1968 Black Power convention was held right here. We addressed all the issues, but we did not create an instrument to implement our strategy, our programs.

CONCRETE

"The difference between this convention and all other conventions is that we leave here with something concrete. We leave here with a party.

"A party is the highest level of political organization. We not only organize ourselves, but we politically educate in the name of African liberation.



Rev. Ben Chavis

This party will represent the interests of Black people towards Black liberation.

"The way we carry this message to the masses of our people is simply, that every opportunity we have, all of us must be organized. All of us must be messengers, organizers.

On the recent acquittal of the Klan/Nazis in Greensboro, North Carolina, Chavis emphasized the need for organization.

"Certainly the Klan is one of the problems—a symptom of the problem.

"But I think it's the system we must struggle against—the racist, capitalist system we must struggle against—that allows the Ku Klux Klan to exist and unleash its venom on Black Americans and other progressive forces.

ORGANIZED

"My position on the Klan is: you show me a Black community that is organized, and I'll show you a Black community that the Klan dare not step foot in. So this party seeks to organize. Not only organize but politically educate.

"Certainly the whole question of self-defence is real. We must not allow the Ku Klux Klan to feel they are going to get away with victimizations—like in Greensboro. This party will speak to that. □

AN ALTERNATIVE FOR BLACKS

The founding of the National Black Independent Political Party (NBIPP), the weekend of November 21-23 is an important beginning. The potential exists for building a genuinely independent political party. If successful, it can change the face of Black politics—and of U.S. politics as a whole.

Independent political action is of tremendous importance. The Republican and Democratic parties are bosses parties—they are not fundamentally different but represent two wings of the ruling class. They exist to perpetuate the capitalist system.

ALTERNATIVE

Yet, for lack of an alternative, the majority of Blacks vote Democrat, as was shown in November's election. Creating an alternative to the Democratic Party is a necessary task.

After all it is Jimmy Carter who has been slashing services over the passed four years. It is a democratic president and Congress which presided over accelerating inflation, unemployment, and economic recession.

It is a Democratic administration which launched the present attack on the gains Blacks made in the 1960s—an attack which will intensify under Reagan.

It is a Democratic administration which has allowed and

encouraged a rise in organized racism. An open Klansman ran on the Democratic ticket in southern California.

Independent Black political action can break the log-jam of American politics in which two parties dominate the political life of the country.

Independent political action outside the electoral arena can galvanize a fight-back, halt the drift to the right.

SPARK

After all, it was the Black movement of the 1960s which helped spark the women's and anti-war movements. A movement based on self-reliance, self-organization and independence of the two main capitalist parties, can begin that process anew.

Independent political organization does not detract from the struggle for socialism. On the contrary, a mass Black party that actively fights for jobs, against cuts, for better education, against racism, will open up American politics.

The role of socialists is to actively participate in these struggles. In struggle we can make the case for socialist organization—for a socialist alternative to the present system.

Capitalism is in crisis. The attacks on Black people will increase. The time is now for building a movement to defend ourselves. □

WHERE WE STAND



What's ON

Workers' Control

Workers create all the wealth under capitalism. A socialist society can only be built when workers collectively seize control of that wealth and democratically plan its production and distribution according to human needs instead of profit.

The working class is the key to the fight for socialism. Freedom and liberation will only be achieved through the struggles of workers themselves, organizing and fighting for real workers' power.

Revolution Not Reform

The capitalist system cannot be patched up or reformed as some union leaders and liberal politicians say. Capitalism is based on the exploitation of workers. No reforms can do away with this exploitation. The only way workers can come to control society and create a system based on freedom and a decent life for all is by overthrowing capitalism and replacing it with revolutionary, democratic socialism.

A Workers' Government

The present state apparatus (federal and state governments, the courts, army and police) was developed to maintain the capitalist system. This apparatus cannot be taken over as it stands and converted to serve workers. The working class needs an entirely different kind of state based upon mass democratic councils of workers' delegates.

Supporting the present state apparatus is a vast network of propaganda — newspapers, radio, television, movies, the education system. Workers are bombarded daily from all directions with capitalism's point of view. The working class needs its own sources of information. To help meet this need, we are dedicated to building a newspaper that the working class can trust and use in the fight against the present system.

Fight Oppression

Capitalism divides the working class — pitting men against women, whites against blacks. Capitalism fosters and uses these divisions to block the unity necessary for its destruction. As capitalism moves into crisis, oppressed groups — blacks, women, latins, Native Americans, gays, youth — suffer most. We support the struggles of these oppressed groups.

We oppose racism in all its forms. We fight segregation in the schools and housing, and against racist firings and harassment. We demand freedom for all political prisoners.

We fight for women's liberation, supporting equal pay for all women workers. We fight for free abortion and an end to forced sterilization. There should be free quality child care for all who need it. We fight for equal hiring opportunities for women and an end to sexual harassment and hirings. Discrimination and harassment of sexual minorities must be fought.

We support the independent organization and struggles of oppressed people to strengthen the working class struggle for socialism.

Rank and File Organization

The unions today are largely business machines that long ago stopped truly fighting for the interests of the working class. Business union leaders act either as brakes on workers' struggles, or as cops, delivering workers into the hands of the bosses. We fight in the unions to put an end to this.

To make the unions fight for workers' interests, workers must organize their power on the shop floor. This can only happen if the rank and file organize themselves independently of the union bureaucrats. We work to build rank and file organizations in unions and companies wherever we are employed.

Internationalism

The working class has no nation. Capitalism is international, so the struggle for socialism must be world-wide. A socialist revolution cannot survive in isolation.

We champion workers' struggles in all countries, from Portugal and Spain to Chile and Puerto Rico — from Palestine and Eastern Europe to China and India. We support all genuine national liberation struggles. We call for victory of the black freedom fighters in Zimbabwe and South Africa. We oppose all forms of imperialism and oppose sending U.S. troops anywhere in the world to impose U.S. interests.

Russia, China, Cuba and Eastern Europe are not socialist countries. They are state capitalist and part of one world capitalist system. We support the struggles of workers in these countries against the bureaucratic ruling class.

Revolutionary Party

The activity of the ISO is directed at taking the initial steps toward building a revolutionary party in a working class fragmented and cut off from socialist ideas. Revolutionaries must be involved in the daily struggles of workers and oppressed groups at the workplace, in the unions and in the communities. We build every struggle that strengthens the self-confidence, organization and socialist consciousness of workers and the oppressed.

As the working class movement gathers strength, the need for revolutionary leadership becomes crucial. We are part of the long process of building a democratic revolutionary party rooted in the working class. Those who agree with our stand and are prepared to help us build toward revolutionary socialism are urged to join us now.

Join the International Socialist Organization

For more information about the International Socialist Organization (ISO), please write to Box 18037, Cleveland, Ohio 44118.

Demonstration in Support of Irish Political Prisoners, Saturday, December 13 at 2:00 pm. Assemble at Copley Square, march to British Consulate, Prudential Center. Call 427-1309 for details.

CHICAGO
Cal Winslow on **Facing Up to Reagan.** December 14 at 4:00 pm. Church of the Holy Covenant, 925 West Diversey.

CINCINNATI
Conference: **Socialist Perspectives for the 1980's.** speakers on the economic crisis, unemployment, and plant closings, the women's movement, the rise of the Klan and more. December 6 and 7 at University of Cincinnati Student Center.

BOSTON
Kevin Murphy and Paul D'Amato on **Lenin.** December 7 at 7:30 pm, 595 Mass Ave. Phone 282-6711 or 427-1309 for details.

CLEVELAND
John Van Raalte on **The New Technology: Is a machine after your job?** December 12 at 8:00pm. Call 371-7648 for details.

DETROIT
Forum: **Missile Madness and Marxism** on December 13 at 7:00 pm. 46 Elm-hurst. Call 868-2932 for details.

SEATTLE
Kadi Sprengle on **Why Doesn't Capitalism work?** December 9 at 11:30 am, University of Washington's Hub. Call 324-2302.

Steve Leigh on **The Reagan Victory: Preparing for 1984?** December 12 at 7:30 pm. IOOF Hall, 915 East Pine. For information call 324-2302.



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"The philosophers have merely interpreted the world. The point is to change it."

— Karl Marx

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reviews

"The life and times of Rosie the riveter"



Women wartime workers at Republic Steel in Buffalo

Vicki Lewis reviews a new documentary film by Connie Field now available from Frontline Films in New York

When America entered World War II, millions of men left the factories and went into the armed forces.

At the same time, production, previously at an all time low level because of the Depression, rose substantially, especially production of ships, planes, tanks, ammunition and other war materials.

American capitalism was faced with a huge gap in the labor force. And who did it turn to to fill it? Women.

But getting women out of their traditional occupations—as clerical and service workers, domestic and farmers, wives and mothers—was not easy, or, at least, it was not supposed to be easy.

Women had been taught that they were not capable of doing factory work, that their proper place was in the home and that if they were going to insist on working outside the home (as many had to), it should be in jobs that were as similar to home and kitchen as possible.

"The Life and Times of Rosie the Riveter", a new documentary film by Connie Field, is the story of how the government and industry manipulated the workforce and, in particular, social attitudes towards women and "women's work" to overcome this gap.

CONTRAST

Field mixes "March of Time" newsreels and government films with interviews of five women who took factory jobs during this period. The

contrast between what the films say and what the women say is incredible.

To watch the propaganda films, one would think that the only thing women did before the war was play bridge and bandage skinned knees.

The films encourage women to give up their selfish lives of leisure ("everyone's doing it") and pitch in to help win the war, implying that the only way they'll ever see their men again is if they do so.

Several years into the war, when production supposedly begins to slack off, the films become filled with images of women going into hysterics upon receiving telegrams that their husbands are dead, and scoldings that by quitting their jobs as soon as they have enough money to buy that fur coat, the women are responsible for the deaths of soldiers overseas.

They are made to feel guilty for not throwing themselves selflessly and wholeheartedly into winning the war capitalism started for its own profit.

OPPORTUNITIES

Women were not the only ones who had new opportunities during the war. Blacks also entered the factories in large numbers for the first time.

Three of the women interviewed in the film are Black, female and working class, and racism is as apparent as sexism in their experience.

One of them describes an incident where, because the Black women insisted on

showers after work if the white women got them, they closed the showers down altogether.

Another tells of being turned down for a job for which she was well qualified while three white women were hired, until she put the boss on the spot and forced him to either admit he was lying about what was available or hire her.

All three of the Black women in the film ended up in low paying service jobs after the war, the advances they had made, allowed only because industry was desperate for workers, wiped out as soon as things got back to normal.

One thing that becomes obvious is that all the propaganda films and urgings from industry and the government were in fact practically unnecessary. Women jumped at the chance to work and the number of working women rose from 26% to 36%.

A lot of effort was spent on convincing them that they could and should do it when, in reality, they needed no convincing.

REASONS

There were a number of reasons for this. First of all was the chance to make the kind of money that most women had never dreamed of.

While they continued to earn about 65% less than men even in the war plants, it was still as much as 40% higher than what women were used to.

Second, while the propa-

ganda films hold that women took the work so easily because it was similar to what they did at home ("this woman operates this machine as easily as a juicer in her own kitchen"), all the women describe the satisfaction they got from actually creating something, rather than servicing something or someone.

SKILL

And all of them speak of the pride they took in having a skill. One woman talks about the pleasure she felt from becoming a good welder and her feeling that welding was an art as well as a job.

The film also deals with the "problem" of how to get the women out of the factories and back into their homes when the men come back to reclaim their jobs.

With VJ Day, the films take a new turn—they begin to dwell on the problem of juvenile delinquency caused by lack of adequate mothering (although when women were needed in the factories, studies of how well children thrived in day care centers were emphasized).

Scenes of kids setting fires and smoking marijuana were used to manipulate women back into the position that capitalism demanded of them, that of nurturers of the next generation of workers. The assumption was that they were only working while the men were away, and that once the men came back, they would return to their traditional roles.

And, of course, return most of them did, to working in cafeterias, offices, and other service industries where they made little money and had no opportunity for creativity.

Most of the women who took these jobs, including all five of those interviewed had to work, a fact ignored by government and industry alike. The backlash of the late 40's and 50's sent them back into the same dead-end, boring jobs they had had before the war.

There are very few criticisms to be made of this film. One is that there is very little mention of union activity. But the arguments about capitalism, exploitation and war do not have to be made explicitly by the film maker. The women make them themselves.

They are all aware of what the war is all about, aware of what they are actually working to defend and aware of the ways in which they were exploited and manipulated.

MILLIONS

The consciousness of these women, and of millions of others like them, explains perfectly the continued emphasis on the idea that women took these jobs out of patriotism, regrettably sacrificing their appointed roles as wives and mothers for the duration, and explains the intensity of the propaganda, the enormous effort made to get them back into their traditional roles when the war ended. □



on the picket line

U-MASS FACULTY & LIBRARIANS STAGE TWO-DAY SICKOUT

BOSTON, MA—Fears of severe lay-offs, cut backs in programs, and administration efforts to destroy university employees unions—in the context of a general squeeze on the public sector—prompted faculty and librarians at U-Mass, Boston, to call a two-day sick-out December 2 and 3.

The sick-out was remarkably successful. An estimated 75% of teachers and 90% of librarians participated over the two days. Most students did not show for classes.

EMPTY

The administration had told the press that only a few "radical troublemakers" were not teaching classes. But when they went to check they found most classes empty.

The sick-out was designed to push stalled negotiations

along. The Faculty-Staff Union (FSU) demands include: faculty participation in personnel procedures and academic planning; part-time employment for part-time faculty; and the right of librarians to maintain any particular political or union beliefs.

PARTICIPATION

The negotiations have not even covered discussion of wages and benefits—the primary issue involved is faculty-staff-student participation in university affairs.

Massachusetts is 48th in the U.S. in percent of money going to education, partially due to the strength of private universities. The figure is likely to decline further due to a recent proposition 13-style tax cut aimed mainly at local services.



U-Mass sickout

The administration has been taking a "hard line."

On November 30 they asked the State Labor Commission to subpoena nine teachers to determine the role of the FSU in organizing the sick-out.

On December 1 the Commission ordered the union to "desist from inducing, encouraging, condoning or engaging in any withdrawal of services."

But the teachers were undeterred. They are determined to win.

CHALLENGE

Further, clerical staff workers, members of SEIU Local 285, voted to strike for a day December 4, over lay-offs wages and conditions.

The administration is being challenged. Strike while the iron is hot.

by KENT WORCHESTER

ANTI-UNION DRIVE IN DETROIT

DETROIT, MI—The 1,000 workers at Whitehead & Kale voted to continue their strike November 13th. The strike began September 10th.

This steel fabricating plant has a long history of anti-union activity. The plant, in River Rouge, makes the steel framework used on railroad cars transporting automobiles.

The company operates another plant in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. A USWA local there has signed a contract since the workers at Whitehead and Kale went on strike. They are competing plants in a limited area.

The strike was called when the company offered the workers a one year extension of their old contract. The company wanted to terminate COLA payments in March 1981. There would be no COLA payments in September 1981, at which time they would negotiate a new COLA agreement.

RECORD

Although the company has been making record profits they offered no flat wage increase for the proposed one year contract.

At a special meeting called on November 13th to consider the company wage offer it was rejected by a unanimous vote.

The strikers have been receiving strike benefits of \$50 a week. Having to pay their life and health insurance these workers are in difficult financial circumstances.

NO COMMENT

The United Auto Workers union has banned foreign made cars from parking lots at three of its Michigan facilities: Solidarity House, the union's headquarters in Detroit; the union's David Miller Building in Detroit; and at the educational center at Black Lake in Northern Michigan.

Not to be outdone, Ohio U.A.W. officials have planned a campaign of picketing outside Toyota and Datsun dealers.

"How can they do this," asks Chris Rhodes, a worker who drives a Toyota and lives in Flint. "I pay my union dues and do my job and nobody is going to tell me what kind of car I can drive. This is America, not Russia. Whatever happened to free choice?"

And whatever happened to Solidarity?

TALKIN' UNION BY JOHN ANDERSON

HOW A STEEL COMPANY TAKES PENSIONS FROM WORKERS

When the Pension Reform Act (PRA) was passed in 1974, it was hailed by the labor bureaucracy as a great victory for the workers. Now in 1980 the workers at Lear Siegler, Inc., an auto parts plant in Detroit and a unit of UAW Local 174, are learning its shortcomings.

This plant employed 900 workers in June 1979. In September of this year it was closed. The plant, which made parts for heavy duty trucks and recreational vehicles, lost its market when the demand for these products sharply declined. The company is a large corporation with plants in several states.

CHARGE

In a federal court suit the UAW has charged the company with a "systematic phase-out" of the plant to escape pension liabilities that would "increase substantially over the next few years."

The PRA of 1974 doesn't protect the pension supplement that is the basis for the 30 and out early retirement pensions. It only covers the basic pension. The Lear Siegler pensions were to pay \$12.00 for each year of service. For thirty years this would give the worker \$360. Because the law has been in effect for only 5 years the pensions were not fully funded.

A woman who wanted to retire at age 56 with 34 years service now is told she will not receive the \$290 supplement. Because the pensions were not fully funded she will receive only \$268 instead of the \$360 she was promised when the UAW contract was ratified.

Without consulting the UAW, Lear Siegler had transferred its pension obligations to the Mutual Benefit Life Insurance Co. It claims its financial deposits with this insurance company meet its financial obligations under the Employees Retirement Insurance



John Anderson is a lifelong militant and socialist. He was formerly president of UAW local 15 in Detroit.

Security Act for 407 retirees, 234 employees with vested rights and 188 former employees with vested rights.

REFUSE

The company has refused to agree to pay severance pay, vacation pay or preferential hiring rights in their other plants. It will not pay either Blue Cross or Blue Shield premiums.

The UAW is charging the company with an unfair labor practice. In years to come the UAW may win some concessions for the laid-off workers. But these will never equal what the UAW promised these workers when they ratified their contract. The UAW always promises more than they can deliver.

A personal history by a rank and file worker
THE DEPRESSION OF THE THIRTIES



BY JOHN ANDERSON

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Ashtabula nurses strike longest in Ohio history

BALTIMORE HOSPITAL WORKERS STRIKE

'WE HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO STRIKE'



by NEIL SMITH & MICHELE LeFAIVRE

BALTIMORE, MD—On December 1st, three hundred rank and file workers walked the picket lines outside Johns Hopkins University Hospital.

1400 nurses aides, cafeteria workers and janitors went on strike when the hospital failed to agree on a new contract.

The workers are members of the National Union of Hospital and Health Care Employees, Local 1199-E. Their last contract had a cost of living clause, but now the hospital is offering only 8% when inflation is over 15%. And the hospital has refused to contribute more to the union health-welfare fund.

ARRESTS

Hopkins immediately based in scabs, arranged an injunction against the pickets, and called police to the picket line. 23 pickets have so far been arrested and charged with obstruction.

But it's clear whose justice is really being obstructed. Hopkins hospital advertizes itself throughout the world as an institution dedicated to humanitarian acts and helping people. But it won't give its workers a living wage.

And when Baltimore children misbehave, a local saying goes, they're threatened with being sent up to Hopkins where "they'll do experiments on you, and you might never come out."

And this is the same hospital which got a federal contract to give third world doctors a crash course in sterilization techniques. It provided the necessary equipment and sent these doctors back to their own countries to practice genocide on the poor.

SPIRIT

So much for humanitarian acts.

The strikers were in high spirits their first day on the picket line. On the second day, the strike extended to Sinai hospital—and 4 more hospitals could be struck in the next two weeks.

ASHTABULA, OH—After 19 weeks on the picket line, morale is high for the 170 nurses at Ashtabula General Hospital.

Their strike has become the longest nurses' strike in Ohio history.

Last February, 87% of the Ashtabula nurses voted 'yes' to the Ohio Nurses Association (ONA) as their collective bargaining agent.

Contract negotiations lasted from April until July. It wasn't until hours before the strike deadline that management finally made an economic offer.

PROPOSAL

And their last proposal was one penny less than their original offer! "All they did was slap us in the face—we had to go on strike," said one nurse.

The 235 bed hospital was completely shut down during the first 6 weeks of the strike. Since then only a small unit has been open.

Nurses' wages at Ashtabula General are about \$1 less per hour than at hospitals in nearby Cleveland.

The Hospital has claimed that they don't have the money to raise wages.

One of the nurses explained, "a couple of years ago, a former administrator

by SHARON SMITH and FAITH SIMON

was wringing his hands saying he didn't know how he was going to meet the payroll. Meanwhile, an IRS form showed a profit of \$750,000. They told the hospital if they didn't spend some of it, they would lose their non-profit status."

Since the strike, the hospital has come into every negotiating session saying, "We have now new economic offer, nothing to talk about."

The nurses have won seniority rights and a 4 step grievance committee. But they're still fighting for a comprehensive in-service program, to improve and modernize nursing practice.

CLOSED

They also want a closed shop, and the right for individual ONA members not to cross other unions' picket lines.

The right-to-strike clause is especially unacceptable to hospital administrators. As the chief of the medical staff said, "We can't have the nurses shutting down the hospital in sympathy every time somebody walks off the job."

Despite an aggressive recruitment campaign on the part of the administration, only 30 nurses have been willing to scab.

Most of the scabs are personal relatives to doctors and administrative staff—some haven't practiced in 10, 20 or even 30 years!

Though not much news leaks out, strikers suspect incompetency from an under-qualified staff of scabs.

Doctors have been calling up striking nurses at home, urging them to come back to work. One doctor pleaded with a nurse to come back to work



saying they needed her because the scabs are such poor nurses.

Most strikers agree that management is out to break the union. As one striker put it: "They want us to come back with no contract, no union."

The head of the board has been quoted as saying: "As soon as the weather gets cold and it starts snowing, these girls will stop this foolishness and come back in."

But the nurses are determined to wait it out and will go on until the hospital is forced to give in.

"The people we're fighting run this community," said one nurse, "They think of us as spineless airheaded ninnies."

The hospital administration is clearly underestimating the strength of the striking nurses as well as community support.

The strikers have held many fund-raising events, all of which have been well attended. Their spaghetti dinner drew over 750 supporters, netting over \$2,300 to keep the strikers going.

In October on a cold rainy day, over 200 trade unionists marched through downtown Ashtabula in support of the striking nurses and then mass picketed the hospital.

GENERAL

And on December 10, nurses at nearby Geneva Memorial Hospital intend to strike. This will mean two out of the area's three hospitals will be shut down by nurses strikes!

"What we're fighting for is not unique to Ashtabula—it's the problems of nursing in general. We had no choice but to strike." □

MADISON, W.VA — Records at the Federal Mine Safety and Health Administration office here show that 133 violations were found during two extensive inspections at a Westmoreland Coal Co. mine where five miners were killed in November.

The miners were killed at the mine in a powerful explosion of methane last month. Both company and state officials said the day after the explosion that an accumulation of methane gas could not have occurred had the mine's ventilation system been working properly. □



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PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALIST ORGANIZATION

'We'll strike till May!' TOOL MAKERS FIGHT FOR THEIR JOBS

by

CAL WINSLOW

MOGADORE, OH—Seventy members of the United Auto Workers (U.A.W.) Local 258 have been on strike here against Cornwell Quality Tools since May 5.

The workers, who make hand tools in this town just East of Akron, walked out when Cornwell presented contract negotiators with a list of more than a hundred take-aways—including demands that the workers make concessions on seniority rights, overtime, and transfers. They also demanded that the workers give up double-time pay for Sunday work.

THREAT

So the workers walked—and they have stayed out, despite court injunctions, and now the threat of the company to hire permanent replacements.

Cornwell's main customers are the Big Three auto makers—so orders obviously have been hit by the recession, but in November Cornwell began advertizing in the Akron papers offering permanent employment.

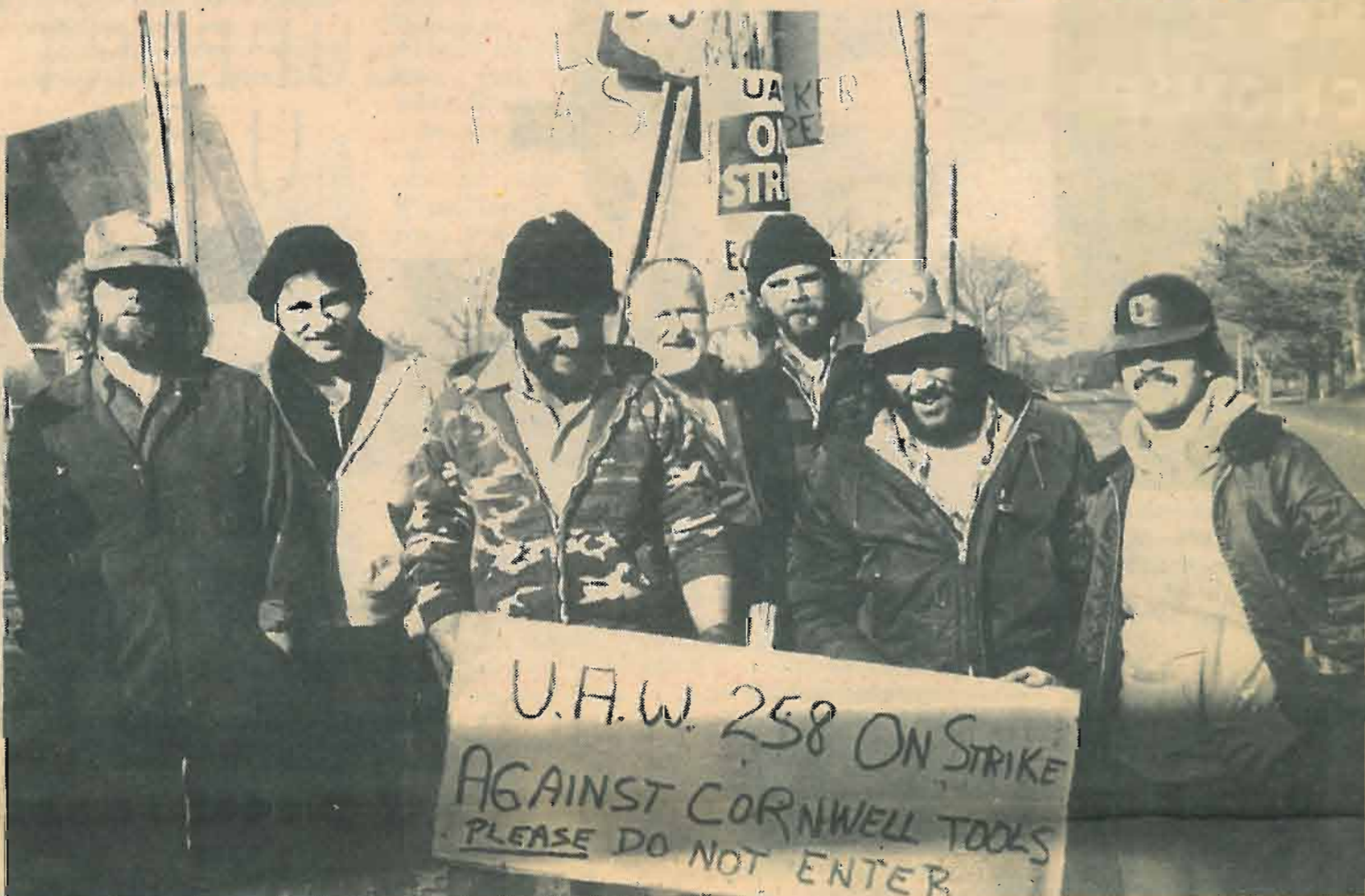
This led to confrontations on the picket lines, however, and has made the strikers more determined than ever.

"The workers are stronger today, more together now than in the whole history of the strike," Dennis Hustead told Socialist Worker. "We may have to stay out till next May, but when we go back, we'll go back together."

SUPPORT

The strikers get \$65 a week from the U.A.W.'s strike fund, but many are having trouble making ends meet. They need support, especially now with winter setting in and the holiday season at hand.

Contributions and messages of support can be sent to: Financial Secretary, U.A.W. 258, 532 Killian Road, Akron, Ohio. □



Spirits are high on Local 258 picket lines

The Gang of Four on trial

by GLENN PERUSEK

On trial in Peking is the "Gang of Four." Led by Jiang Qing, Mao's widow, the four were purged from power in October, 1976, just a month after their benefactor Mao's death.

The Gang was among those responsible for putting into practice the "Cultural Revolution" — Mao's own scheme aimed at purging the Chinese bureaucracy.

The outcome of the trial is a foregone conclusion, the defendants will be found guilty as charged. For them there remains only the sentencing. The current leadership is in a tricky position, though, since they want to blame the "gang" for everything that went wrong in China since 1958 without directly attacking

Mao himself. For now Deng would rather not divorce himself from Mao's legacy. It is still a powerful stabilizing factor among a cynical population.

So why go to all the trouble to put Jiang and the "gang" on trial? Simply, the answer is public relations.

CONFIDENT

Deng Xiaoping and his group now in control want the Chinese bureaucracy and, more importantly, Western investors to feel confident the present regime is here to stay.

Mao's policy of the sixties was national independence in the economic sphere, cloaked

in the rhetoric of equality. Deng understands that this course failed to serve the goal of Chinese economic competitiveness with the West.

STEADY

The new strategy is for steady growth, targetting especially large scale industry for development. They have made the West an offer that cannot be refused: fixed wage rates lower than even Hong Kong, tax breaks and incentives for investment in the target areas, and freedom to trade directly with individual state enterprises.

The result: American imports to China in 1980, for example, will be double the 1978 level — a whopping \$2,000,000,000.

Deng and his crew want to show that investment in China will be good business. So all opposition, real or imagined, has to go. Since Deng himself has been caught up in internal power struggles and overthrown twice in the past, he wants to lay the ghost of the "gang" to rest once and for all.

Soon to come will be attacks on Mao himself. The assessment of the Mao period is

scheduled for next year's Party Congress.

The show trial of the "Gang of Four" in Peking is being received quite well by the Western Media. True, it is a messy business, dealing with old radical oppositionists. But the Chinese leadership is actually being praised by Western journalists for trying to establish "equality before the law" and a codified system of justice. Hardly a word is uttered of Stalin's purge trials of the 1930's.

The power struggle in China and all its trappings have nothing to do with socialism, the self-rule of workers over their society.

CATCH-UP

Rather, the Chinese rulers want to play catch-up to the West. But since they enter as a backward and thus disadvantaged competitor, their economic development can be had only at the price of great hardship for the workers and peasants of China. And in a world economy already in a generalized crisis, the generalized crisis, the Chinese economy will be forced into subordination to the needs of the developed countries. Their problems will not disappear, instead they will become more acute. □

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