

Socialist Worker

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THE REAL REASONS FOR WORLD HUNGER
See pages 8 and 9

DECEMBER 1984



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REAGAN'S RECOVERY IS

MORE BUDGET SLASHING PLANNED

GRINDING

TO A HALT



One month after Reagan's big election win, the recovery which carried him to the landslide is melting beneath him.

The end of the recovery—which many economists predicted for mid-1985—seems to be coming much sooner. *Business Week* asked in late November: "Is the Recovery on

its Last Legs?"

Facts answer the question. Since August, new unemployment claims have climbed steadily. Last month, they reached 412,000. Manufacturing employment is dropping.

ORDERS

At the same time, orders for "durable goods"—items like washing machines and televisions—have plunged by 7% since their March, 1984, peak.

All of this comes as government officials revise their estimates of the federal budget deficit upward—adding another \$30 billion to the already huge \$180 billion deficit.

Reagan's and Congress' answer is to cut social programs, like Medicare and Social Security. Veterans' benefits are already targeted for the ax.

The employers' offensive against unions and working class living standards will continue. And with increasing unemployment, bosses will have a powerful club to hold over the heads of striking workers. There will, no doubt, be substantial defeats for workers in the next few years.

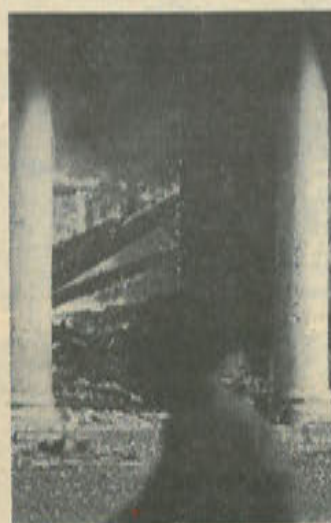
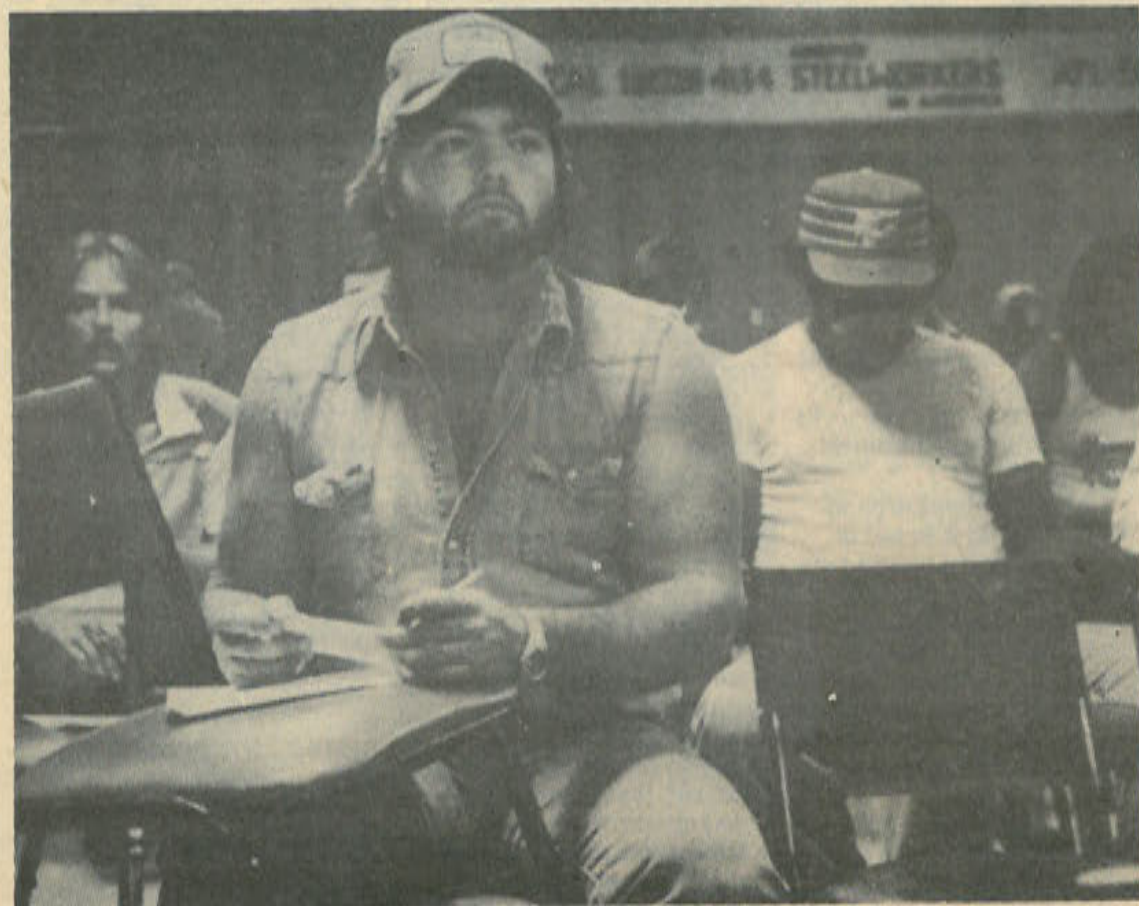
But workers will also fight back. And we must use every opportunity to build a long-term and consistent alternative to the misery and irrationality of this system—a socialist alternative. □



FAR RIGHT BOMBS TWO MORE CLINICS
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THE FAR RIGHT ON THE OFFENSIVE AGAINST ABORTION RIGHTS MARYLAND ABORTION CLINICS BOMBED...

Anti-abortion terrorists struck two Maryland clinics in late November. The clinics, located in Wheaton and Rockville, were blown apart by bombs in the early morning of November 19. Fortunately, no one was injured, but damage to the clinics totals at least \$400,000.

"HAPPY"

The bombings followed the arrest of 46 anti-abortionists who tried unsuccessfully to block the entrance to the clinics two days earlier. These same demonstrators "deplored" violence against clinics, but many were "hap-

REPORT BY KATHY OGREN

py" that these clinics were bombed.

Jayne Bray, a member of the so-called "Pro-Life Non-Violent Action Committee" showed the anti-abortionists' skill at speaking out of both sides of their mouths: "I am personally opposed to the destruction of property, but I respect the right of people to do it where babies are being slaughtered."

There have been three other

bombings in Maryland this year. Clearly violence against women and their health services is on the rise.

These bombings are the latest in a string of violent incidents at abortion clinics and women's health centers across the country. According to the Planned Parenthood Federation of America, fires or explosions have damaged at least 24 centers in seven states and the District of Columbia this year, and there have been at least 150 less serious acts of violence. There were only four such incidents in 1983.

And anti-abortionists plan to increase their harassment.

One Maryland anti-abortionist makes it clear that these attacks will continue. "Pro-lifers are going to act. The battle of words ended years ago. The question is what shape will the action take."

FANATICS

These fanatics were obviously not stopped by police arrests. But the anti-abortionists can be stopped. The concerted efforts of reproductive rights activists can stop clinic attacks of all kinds—in Maryland and across the country. Defend the rights of patients and staff—and the lives of women. □

RACIST ATTACKS IN CHICAGO

by JANET SORENSEN

CHICAGO, IL—Over 100 people rallied to protest a racist attack on a Black family in a southwest side neighborhood here last month.

The family had moved into a mostly white neighborhood known as "The Island" and was attacked by a dozen white men, some waving guns, who hurled bricks through the family's apartment windows. The family was barricaded in their house for six hours while several cops on the scene did nothing to stop the attack.

About 100 neighborhood residents gathered across the street from the rally, separated from the protesters by an equal number of cops.

Some of the counter-protesters carried banners with racist slogans and many cheered when someone shouted a racist remark.

Black protesters had to be escorted back to their cars by white protesters after the rally finished.

FIREBOMBING

This attack was one of three such incidents in three weeks. The second attack was the firebombing of another Black family's home in a predominantly white southwest side neighborhood.

In that attack, a gasoline-filled bottle was thrown through the window of the family's home and exploded in flames that scorched two walls before being put out. The family said the bombing would not force them out of their home.

In the third attack, a Chilean family was the target of an attempted firebombing. The family had been exiled from Chile in 1976.

Racist attacks like these will continue until the disease at their heart—this system—is removed. And we must be prepared to help defend the right of Blacks to live wherever they choose by attending rallies like the one in "The Island" or by actively defending their homes. □

...But abortion foes set back in Washington

SEATTLE, WA—Two small victories for abortion rights were scored in Washington State in November. On election day, voters rejected, by 53% to 47%, an initiative that would have eliminated state funding for welfare abortions. A week later, a former county coordinator for that anti-abortion initiative confessed, in court, to setting four fires at abortion clinics.

Curtis Beseda, a "nice Catholic boy" who had been an active picketer against the Everett Feminist Women's Health Center, took the stand in his own defense on the second day of his arson trial and told the jury that he had set the three fires at the Everett clinic and one in a Bellingham clinic. The Everett clinic closed for good after the third fire last April, since they were evicted from their building and unable to get fire insurance.

GUILTY

Beseda's defense attorney tried but failed to convince the jury that his actions were not "malicious," but done to stop "murders." The jury found Beseda guilty. He faces 40 years in prison.

The election day victory, saving welfare abortion fund-

ing, came after a relatively quiet campaign on both sides. The anti-abortionists tried to hide their anti-woman intent of outlawing all abortions behind rhetoric extolling "taxpayer's rights" not to pay for something they don't endorse.

Unfortunately, the 60-organization coalition spearheaded by Planned Parenthood to defeat the initiative also made the cost of welfare abortions their main issue. Virtually ignoring the fact that abortion is a woman's right, pure and simple, the coalition argued that welfare abortions are cheaper than raising welfare babies—a racist, anti-working class position that has been the hallmark of the liberal pro-choice movement.

Free abortion on demand is the only way women will ever be able to freely exercise their right to abortion.

The defeat of this anti-abortion initiative is a victory—it will save women's lives. We have a long way to go, however, in building a socialist movement capable of winning minority and working class women's right to abortion without resort to racist fears and class prejudice. □

by MARY DEATON



PROPOSED RULES ANOTHER ATTACK ON WELFARE TENANTS

Flushed with excitement after their election victory, the Reagan administration has eagerly proposed new legislation attacking the poor. The new rules, if passed, would allow state and local governments to make sure welfare recipients pay their rent by issuing two-party checks requiring the signature of a landlord before they can be cashed.

APPLAUD

Officials applaud the proposal and argue, with a curious, twisted sort of logic, that it would actually benefit the poor. They say that by forcing families to pay their rent—and to pay it before anything else—the number of evictions would

be drastically reduced.

But in New York City alone, over 50,000 people are homeless because welfare payments are simply too low to cover the exorbitant rents that landlords charge.

Allowing landlords to take the first bite out of welfare checks would take food out of the mouths of many families. And since the proposed program would make tenant protests and rent strikes impossible, landlords could stop providing adequate upkeep and services.

The proposed legislation is yet another attack on the pocketbooks and the dignity of welfare recipients,

and reduces still more the control they can exercise over their own lives.

RACISM

The rule primarily affects those who are already oppressed by institutional racism and sexism, as the vast majority of welfare payments are to Black families and families headed by single women. As the head of a New York tenants' organization put it, the proposed rule would be one more step towards "making serfs of welfare tenants."

The proposal shows clearly just how welfare payments are viewed by the government—not as a way to meet the needs of people who are shafted by



the capitalist system, but as yet another way that money can be efficiently channelled into the coffers of the rich. □

Where to begin after the '84 elections

Ronald Reagan's re-election should have come as no surprise. Nor is it a great mystery what policies he intends to follow in his next four years in office—another four years of cutbacks, attacks on workers, civil rights and so on.

But we must assess the outcome of the election and from that develop a realistic perspective of the tasks facing us in the days ahead.

For many activists, Reagan's re-election was the worst possible nightmare. Mondale, it was argued, while perhaps not perfect was at least the better candidate. This was the justification for throwing everything behind him and the Democratic Party.

Some of the arguments were quite cynical. William Winpisinger wrote, for instance: "But even if the Mondale-Ferraro agenda was empty, and full of the same old crap, duplicity and mush, there'd still be compelling reasons to go to the polls on November 6 and vote against Ronald Reagan."

MYOPIC

Now that the elections are over, the labor bureaucrats are just as myopic as before the election. The *AFL-CIO News* wrote in its post-election issue that the election was a political victory for Reagan's critics and was a "voter rebellion" against the Reagan recession. Victor Gotbaum, the executive director of AFSCME's District 37 said that "labor took a quantum leap forward in American politics in 1984."

So the AFL-CIO is congratulating itself on its effort and strategy in this election. After all, they say, a majority of union members voted against Reagan. It is true that the 17-19% spread in favor of Mondale in this election is higher than the 12% spread that Carter got, and that 68% of the unemployed and 90% of Blacks voted for Mondale.

WHAT WE THINK



Reagan did not receive a mandate with his landslide victory. But even if he had, workers' ideas can change very quickly in the course of struggle—as the PATCO strikers showed.

But this argument is disingenuous to say the least. Reagan received a larger share of the labor voters than in the last election. Despite all the registration drives before the elections, the actual number of voters is only .3% higher than it was in 1980. Even though Blacks and Hispanics comprise 20% of the voting rolls, only 12% voted. And the gender gap vote fizzled, with women supporting Reagan 57% to 42%.

Above and beyond this, what the AFL-CIO, NOW and other organizations endorsed

was an even more right-wing Democratic Party—and there is not much joy in applauding that vote.

NOTHING TO CELEBRATE

There is nothing for workers to celebrate in Reagan's election—nor in the strategy that was so ardently followed by the labor bureaucrats and many on the "left."

This is not to say that the situation is hopeless. Far from it. It is true that 47% of the voters did not even bother to vote and that Reagan was elected by a minority. Moreover, the election is in no way a mandate for the right-wing as the press has made out. For example, the majority of Americans are not pro-war, and most support a woman's right to choose abortion.

Reagan's success can be attributed to the recovery in the economy rather than being explained as an endorsement of the growing right-wing in the Republican Party.

At the same time, the election highlights the continued shift to the right of the American political spectrum over the last decade. This shift means a greater acceptance of some of the right's ideas by a section of the working class.

UNEVEN

But this is only natural, since it is the right that set the terms of the political debate. More importantly, in the absence of struggle—and victories—on the part of workers, it is not surprising that the mood should be defensive and that workers today have very uneven levels of consciousness.

It is worth remembering how a group of conservative workers—like the PATCO strikers—can have their illusions in the system smashed as a result of struggle. We can expect, as the latest recession begins to set in, that more struggles will grow in which workers' ideas about the present system will be tested and changed.

This should underline again that the future for changing the present situation does not lie in more of the same—electoralism and adaptation to the right.

Some say, "What do you mean workers can change society? Look, they voted for Reagan."

We have to answer that there have been periods in the past of working class quiescence, but that they can change very fast and unpredictably. Certainly that was the case in the 1930s and again in the early 1970s. And we must not forget that the last two presidents to win landslide elections—Johnson in 1964 and Nixon in 1972—soon found themselves in the midst of mass movements that opposed them.

We stress struggle because it is there that people can begin to develop confidence in their ability fight back, and win. The key to not ending up in the same situation come the next election is to continue to build a socialist current—a socialist organization—which can begin, albeit to a minority, to pose a clear alternative.

The collapse of most of the left into the Democratic Party is due, primarily, to the failure

to see struggle and the self-activity of workers as the center of any socialist perspective. And it has led many today to simply throw up their hands in utter despair. They backed Mondale and waved flags because they believed it was necessary. Now they have no politics or strategy left.

"We have no coherent platform from which to address the majority of the American people," writes James Weinstein in the post-election issue of the social democratic newspaper *In These Times*.

NO DESPAIR

This sentiment is echoed by many around the Rainbow Coalition and in the "movements." But there should be no despair if one sees the task as addressing a minority of Americans at present, and building in small but important ways the beginnings of a larger socialist current in the future.

Socialism or barbarism, Marx once wrote. Today, this means the task of maintaining and spreading socialist ideas and organization. Nothing more, nothing less.



Even in a down period, there are sparks of resistance. Pictured above is a 1982 march in Washington, D.C. against U.S. intervention in Central America.

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MASSIVE CRACKDOWN AGAINST SOUTH AFRICAN BLACKS

In a massive show of strength, Black workers in South Africa's industrial heartland, Transvaal, brought industry to a halt with a two-day general strike November 5 and 6. Train and bus service was severely disrupted, and buses were withdrawn from six Black townships.

The South African Broadcasting Corporation, which is owned by the government, estimated that two-thirds of Black industrial workers in the Johannesburg area participated in the strike. And according to government officials, 250,000 students stayed home in solidarity with the workers.

LARGEST

The issues of the strike included rent and tax increases, detention of opponents of apartheid without trial, and the continuing presence of troops in the Black areas. The work stoppage was the largest and strongest political strike since the early 1960s, even though it was limited to one area. At least 20 strikers were killed in clashes with the police, who used rubber bullets, tear gas and buckshot against the workers.

In the course of the strike,

by CHRISTINA BAKER

Black policemen and councillors were particular targets for attack. The homes of seven councillors were burned down, and another ten councillors were forced to resign their posts. The councils serve as local governments of the Black townships, and as such enforce apartheid rule.

Two days after the strike ended, security police raided the offices of protest groups such as the United Democratic Front, and a Black labor union association, the Federation of South African Trade Unions. They detained at least six leaders of the strike and seized documents, printing equipment and film. The detention of union leaders is the biggest government action against senior figures in the labor federations since Black unions were legalized in 1979.

Within the week following the raids an additional 14 people were detained. All of those detained have belonged to organizations recognized as lawful in South Africa.

RAIDS

At the same time the Johannesburg raids were occurring, 6,000 workers at the govern-



ment-owned Sasol coal-to-oil plant in Secunda—about 60 miles to the east—were standing in lines waiting to be paid and then bused back to far-away Black homelands. They had all been summarily fired for their failure to show up for work on the first day of the strike.

In response to the state's backlash, Thami Mali, chairman of the Transvaal Stay-Away Committee (the strike committee) and one of those detained, said: "We have proved to the government that we have power in our hands, and we can use it. No amount

of intimidation can stop us."

On November 10, rioting erupted again in at least 10 Black townships across the country. In retaliation, police repeatedly fired rubber bullets, birdshot and tear gas in their attempt to restore "order." In Sebokeng, about 30 miles south of Johannesburg, crowds of workers set up barricades in the streets and stoned a police patrol car.

The recent events are a continuation of the unrest which has been ongoing since September and in which at least 160 people have been killed—

only one of them white. The last three months have seen a rash of protests against massive rent increases, unrest over political grievances, and the first legal strike of Black gold miners since 1946, in which seven miners died.

And the severely harsh response of the white minority reflects their surprise and fear at the increasingly volatile situation. The Home Affairs minister stated that, "Order will be maintained."

"ORDER"

This "order" amounts to the detention, without trial, of 1,000 opponents of apartheid so far this year. South Africa's 21 million Blacks constitute 73% of the population and represent the overwhelming mass of the working class. As such they have the potential of posing an unbeatable challenge to the increasingly hysterical white rulers.

A few short months of concerted activity by Black workers—as workers—has done far more to challenge apartheid than the decades of valiant guerrilla struggle. Blacks in South Africa not only have the numbers, they have the power—as workers—to bring the racist regime to its knees. □



"I believe in slavery." This is not a quote from an eighteenth century plantation owner, it is a statement made in 1984 by a man who was all too willing to offer his other fully racist opinions. Unfortunately, he is not alone in his attitude toward Black Americans.

Although slavery was abolished in the 1860s, its inheri-

by KATHY STEWART

tance of racism persists today. The first cargo of 20 slaves arrived in Virginia in 1616. Increasingly, slavery became vital to the economy of the southern colonies. Huge plantations and fortunes were built from the blood and sweat of the slaves. There were also



Racist violence—the legacy of slavery.

THE HISTORY AND POLITICS OF BLACK AMERICA

THE ROOTS OF RACIST IDEAS

smaller farms that depended on slave labor for their very existence.

DEHUMANIZING

Slavery was a brutal and dehumanizing institution. It was also a very profitable institution for the slave owners. Plantation owners went to great lengths to protect their

First in a new series on Black history

profits. Because of the potential for unrest and revolt among their human property, owners kept slaves as ignorant as possible.

Slaves were not allowed to learn how to read and write. Harsh punishments were meted out to anyone caught trying to escape bondage. Plantation owners also went to great lengths to justify the institution of slavery. Essays were written citing religious, historical, scientific and sociological arguments to demonstrate that slavery was good for both Blacks and whites.

Much was written of the troubles a slaveowner endured because of his slaves. Slaves

were depicted as being lazy, stupid, dishonest and unable to take care of themselves.

Thus, an owner could consider himself a good Christian humanitarian while reaping the profits of slave labor.

The ideology developed to justify the ownership of human beings became an integral part of social relations. Even the few "free" Blacks were treated as sub-human by most whites.

In the southern U.S., where the largely agricultural economy was based on slave labor, the existence of a free Black was especially threatening.

LITTLE IMPROVEMENT

When slavery was finally abolished, conditions for most Black Americans saw little improvement—especially with the end of Reconstruction. The racist ideas persisted.

It was still important to consider Blacks as inferior so they would remain a source of cheap, easily manipulated labor. Groups such as the Ku Klux Klan terrorized Blacks in an effort to keep them from even trying to improve their conditions.

Today, racist ideas are still important to the "owners"—not the owners of slaves, but the owners of factories, stores

and other profit-making facilities. Racism translates into profits for the owners, because as long as Blacks are considered inferior, they receive lower pay and are subjected to inferior working conditions.

This is demonstrated in the conditions of the Black working class today. The rates of unemployment, poverty and infant mortality are all higher for Blacks than for whites.

Racism also serves another very important purpose for the owners—the ruling class. Racism divides Black and white workers.

BLAME

White workers can blame Blacks for a whole range of problems. Blaming one particular group of people, such as Blacks, women and so on, for the problems presented by this system takes the focus off the real source of oppression—the people who control the wealth of this country. They recognize that they could not maintain their wealth and power in the face of a unified working class revolt.

We, as socialists, also recognize this, and must struggle against racism as a crucial part of the struggle for human liberation. □

Reagan steps up military threats against the Sandinistas

The U.S. government has stepped up the heat against Nicaragua. On the evening of the election, Reagan's administration said it believed that Russian MiG-21 jets were being delivered to Corinto, a Nicaraguan port.

State Department spokesman John Hughes announced: "We have a compelling national interest in the area. We're saying we do not think the presence of high-speed aircraft, delivered to a regime of that character, given its activities and its proven record of subversion outside its own borders, we do not consider that to be in the national interest of the U.S."

Secretary of State George Schultz said, on November 12, that the U.S. will "work in every way that we can to cast this aggression and subversive influence out of our hemisphere."

SUBVERSIVE

But who are the real subversives, Nicaragua or the U.S.? The United States holds superior military force in Central America. It has built seven airfields, two radar stations and other facilities—supporting some 1,500 permanently stationed troops—in Honduras, which borders Nicaragua.

The U.S. has actively supported the military intervention of the contras (counter-

by GLENN PERUSEK

revolutionaries) against Nicaragua. The contras claim 12-15,000 soldiers under arms inside the Nicaraguan border, and are using Honduras as a staging ground for their activities.

In comparison, Nicaragua's military force is derisory. According to a U.S. government report released in July, 1984, Nicaragua has about 50,000 soldiers under arms. Its air force consists of a dozen antiquated combat aircraft. It has been necessary for the Nicaraguan government to hold the country in a state of alert, given the threat of a U.S. invasion.

In early November, the U.S. sent 25 warships, including the battleship Iowa, several cruisers, destroyers and two attack submarines to the Caribbean near Nicaragua on "maneuvers."

DIVIDED

But high officials in the Reagan administration are divided over whether to launch an invasion into Nicaragua. Hard-liners such as Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger favor a full-scale invasion. But moderates such as presidential advisor James Baker and Schultz are arguing against any deployment of U.S. troops.

They draw a line at allowing



The U.S.S. New Jersey fires its guns.

Russian MiG-21 jets to be delivered to Nicaragua, but are concerned that a war would be unpopular in the United States.

As one military analyst, a former officer, puts it, "There might be air strikes, but this isn't Grenada—an invasion would require 150,000 U.S. troops, and you don't fight a war with a volunteer army. It would require a draft. How many politicians are going to vote for a draft?"

"The political consequences would be horrendous—it wouldn't last two weeks. The

country nearly went crazy when we lost 268 marines in Beirut—we'd lose that many in a week in Nicaragua."

PORTRAY

To justify invading a tiny and militarily weak country, the U.S. must portray it as a puppet of the Russians. The U.S. must deny the legitimacy of the government—thus its criticism of the recent elections. For U.S. officials, the worst nightmare would be Nicaragua's acquisition of French Mirage jets. This would undercut the "Soviet

menace" argument.

But the real "threat" Nicaragua poses is as an example of revolt to the workers and peasants of other Latin American countries—unpopular regimes that are propped up by U.S. money and arms.

Whether there is a full-scale invasion of Nicaragua or not, the U.S. will continue to harass the Nicaraguan regime, essentially because its government is not willing to be completely subordinated to the dictates of the U.S.

Such action must be opposed.

NICARAGUA IN THE VISE

The ousting of a bloody dictatorship, and the sweeping social reforms and public commitment to popular power in Nicaragua which followed the Sandinistas' overthrow of Somoza have been a source of inspiration to socialists everywhere.

It is an impressive achievement. Since the 1979 revolution, illiteracy has been reduced from over half the country's population to less than 3% and every child has a place at school.

Hospitals, health clinics and health programs—like the vaccination campaign which eradicated polio in under four years—are available to all as of right. By the fifth anniversary of their revolution, the Sandinistas had distributed more than two million acres of land to the peasants.

These reforms have been carried out in spite of a brutal imperialist war on both the military and the economic front waged against this tiny country of less than two million people.

SOLIDARITY

The right of Nicaraguans to determine their own future hangs by a slender thread and their struggle to keep it demands unconditional solidarity from anyone who calls him or herself a socialist. This is not because Nicaragua is a socialist country, as many of its supporters claim. It is because whatever chance workers and peasants here and in the rest of Central America have of controlling their destiny will receive a massive setback if American imperialism subjugates the region.

The main speaker at Nicaragua's May Day celebration was Jaime Wheelock, one of the nine Comandantes of the revolution and former leader of the Proletarian Tendency of the FSLN

by JOANNA ROLLO

which argued, unsuccessfully, in the 1960s and 1970s, that the movement add class struggle to its anti-imperialist program.

"The working class is in power in Nicaragua," Wheelock told the crowd of 30,000. "The revolutionary leadership, the Sandinista National Liberation Front, is the organization that returned power to workers after taking it away from Somocismo."

Three months later, in the middle of August, workers at the state-owned Victoria brewing company staged an unofficial strike and occupied their factory in support of a wage claim.

"We support and love the revolution, but we also love our children and have an obligation to support them," one worker told a reporter from the *New York Times*. "They say that the revolution is for the people, but it doesn't always seem that way."

Having been threatened with prosecution by the Minister of Labor for having disregarded the law in relation to strikes, the workers returned in exchange for a promise that their demands would be resolved fairly.

There have been few strikes in Nicaragua since 1981 because they were outlawed under a state of emergency which was only lifted recently in preparation for the forthcoming elections.

The brewery workers were affiliated to the CST, the Sandinista Workers Federation—the largest of eleven trade union federations in Nicaragua with over 100,000 members. The CST supported the no-strike legislation, for the reasons given by their head of international relations, Francisco Gonzales:

"To strike is a historic right of

workers. It's not possible to understand why it has been suspended if one doesn't live here. You have to experience the tremendous inherited difficulties, the problems resulting from outside aggression, the pressures created by the imperialists' refusal to grant credits, the diplomatic pressures, the direct counter-revolutionary military aggression supported by the CIA.

"A union member living in Nicaragua will understand why the right to strike has been suspended. In this country at this time, any strike, no matter how small, ends up favoring the counter-revolution."

FAR CRY

Every statement Gonzales makes about the objective conditions facing the Sandinistas is true, but the steps the Sandinistas have taken to deal with them are a far cry from the institution of workers' power.

In 1979, the Sandinistas assumed control of an economy stricken by crisis. Imminent collapse was staved off only by injections of foreign aid, principally from social democratic European governments. The conditions for that aid was the cessation of the limited expropriations that had been carried out. Banking and insurance had been nationalized, as had most of the mines and about a quarter of the manufacturing industry.

It was a condition with which the Sandinistas complied. In the "national interest," to enable the new state to survive, state ownership of the means of production was deferred. Nicaragua has a bigger private sector than Panama with 68% of its economy still in the hands of the old ruling class.



Daniel Ortega

However it is presented, Nicaragua's mixed economy operates by the same rules as the world system of which it is part—those of capitalism. That meant providing some material incentive to the private sector, honoring a foreign debt which this year totalled some \$200 million while diverting ever more resources into a war which has cost \$204 million in damage to the economy—an economy based on the export of agricultural crops—which has been stricken by the international recession.

In the face of this, the Sandinistas adopted a policy of austerity—attempting to raise productivity while holding down wages.

Prices have soared, and real wages are estimated to have fallen 50% since 1979. Poverty is rife in town and countryside.

Through the mass organizations they lead—such as the association of agricultural workers, the Sandinista Workers Federation, and the Committees for the Defense of Sandinism—the Sandinistas have waged a political propaganda campaign whose message is "sacrifice now, for the sake of the future." Here, as in every other country, it is the mass of the people who are bearing the burden of that sacrifice—which has meant not just economic hardship, but a virtual suspension of civil liberties.

Not only have strikes been outlawed, and strike leaders arrested and jailed—the right to



Miguel D'Escoto

criticize and publicly question the government's policy was also removed under the state of emergency.

SUBORDINATION

Externally, they have followed a similar policy—the subordination of solidarity with other working classes to the needs of their own state. At an international trade union conference in Managua this April, Victor Tirado, one of the nine Comandantes, told the delegates:

"The Sandinista policy is not based on exporting the revolution. If we wanted to export revolution, we would not receive the support of Mexico. The Contadora Group would not take us seriously."

All of this follows from the politics of nationalism. Battered by an imperialist war and world market forces over which they have no control, their only room to maneuver lies in persuading the people to accept their policies. And the problems are increasing.

The blockade and mining of the ports has meant millions of dollars of lost exports. The war is now so serious that conscription has been started. The strength of the dollar has resulted in soaring prices of imported goods and acute shortages. Rationing has now been introduced.

For the workers and peasants of Nicaragua, that means further sacrifice and increased productivity.

Talking about socialism

Is the state a neutral body?

In a recent discussion, the question of the class nature of the state was raised in the following way: "Aren't there some functions that a capitalist government performs that are in the interests of all of society—for example, garbage collection and sanitation?"

Certainly, there are functions any government must perform to keep society going, and on one level they appear to be classless. For example, whenever there is a natural disaster, such as a flood or a hurricane, government agencies act to see that roads and communication lines are repaired, and that water systems are protected. This benefits all classes and would be necessary under any form of government.

The capitalist state, then, has non-class tasks it fulfills. However, it does them in its own class way, and toward ends that have positive consequences for itself.

SANITATION

One way to illustrate this is to look at the history of sanitation. We know that it is in the interest of society as a whole to prevent epidemics. But this was not always the case.

Before it was proven to the ruling classes of Europe that contagious diseases struck down the rich as well as the poor, sanitation was not supported as a necessary social responsibility.

In *Capital*—Karl Marx's most famous work—he wrote that "the mere fear of contagious diseases which do not spare even the 'respectability' brought into existence, from 1847 to 1864, no less than 10 Acts of Parliament on sanitation."

Frederick Engels, Marx's life-long collaborator, described what happened once scientists proved that small pox and cholera were cultured and spread from unhealthy conditions:

"As soon as this fact had been scientifically established, the philanthropic bourgeois became inflamed with the noble spirit of competition in their solicitude for the health of their workers. Societies were founded, books were written, proposals drawn up, laws debated and passed, in order to stop up the sources of the ever-recurring epidemic."

Today, the class nature of sanitation can be seen by comparing the neighborhoods

by BILL ROBERTS

where workers live with those of the rich. Which class lives in the vicinity of steel mills? Which ruling class family lives in the Love Canal area, or died in the recent gas plant explosion in Mexico City?

SLUM REMOVAL

Another area in which class determines action is that of urban renewal. Slum removal is done in the name of "civic improvement." But why do slums reappear somewhere else?

Engels described this process in nineteenth century Paris: "No matter how different the reasons may be, the result is everywhere the same: the most scandalous alleys and lanes disappear to the accompaniment of lavish self-glorification by the bourgeoisie on account of this tremendous success, but they reappear again at once somewhere else, and often in the immediate neighborhood."

It is no different in twentieth century America. What are now high-rise slums, built on Chicago's south side in the 1960s, were designed to replace decaying neighborhoods there.

So, the class nature of the state is not to be found in the secondary functions every state must fulfill, but in how these functions are carried out.

Sanitation, neighborhood improvements, disaster relief, are all done within the framework of ruling class interests. No matter how class-neutral these functions might appear, they all flow through the institutions dominated by class considerations, and thus are molded in the interests of the dominant class.

CLASS NATURE

This is how the class nature of the state asserts itself, even though the task may be without malice or overt class interests. While the basic task of the capitalist state is to "hold down and exploit the oppressed class," it also must fulfill roles of the capitalist class.

Garbage picked up under a workers' state will be organized from a different class interest, and therefore will be shaped by the needs of workers. Undoubtedly, new forms of garbage collection will be a product of the new order. □



Firefighting and garbage collection are determined by class priorities.

ANTI-PORNOGRAPHY CRUSADE: AN UNHOLY ALLIANCE

by NANCY MACLEAN

Ten years ago, no one would have believed it. But it happened in 1984. A large and influential group of feminists have, in practice, allied themselves with some of the staunchest foes of women's liberation: evangelical churches and the "new right."

The unholy alliance was born in Indianapolis where a new legislative approach to pornography achieved its first success. Designed by separatist feminists Catherine MacKinnon and Andrea Dworkin, the law defines pornography as a form of sex discrimination and allows for civil suits against producers and distributors. MacKinnon's approach gave new heart to right-wing anti-sex forces in Indianapolis.

Among the ordinance's main advocates were the Reverend Greg Dixon, pastor of the Indianapolis Baptist Temple and a former official of the Moral Majority. Dixon is a staunch anti-abortion and anti-ERA crusader who believes that homosexuality should be a felony and that sexual freedom is preparing the way for Armageddon.

Another is Ron Hackler of Citizens for Decency whose ultimate goal is an omnibus obscenity law that would outlaw the depiction of any sexual acts, not just violent pornography.

Then there is City-County Council member Beulah Coughenour, a Stop-ERA activist, member of the lobby-group Pro-America and evangelical, conservative Republican who introduced the law, organized for it and steered it through passage.

NAIVETE

Even more extraordinary than the roster of supporters is the

willful naivete of the separatist feminists promoting such legislation. MacKinnon, for example, insists that the Indianapolis coalition was organized "on a feminist basis," but the main forces behind the passage of the ordinance oppose women's liberation. They see "smut" as a threat to the traditional family and women's position in it, and they say so. But the separatists refuse to hear.

In Madison, Wisconsin, a similar grouping has appeared. With the support of a women's group called the Task Force on Prostitution and Pornography, feminist county supervisor Kathleen Nichols has proposed an ordinance modeled on the Minneapolis and Indianapolis bills. Leaders of such local anti-women's liberation forces as the Dane County Evangelical Alliance and the Eagle Forum (Phyllis Schlafly's anti-ERA group) have expressed support for it, and have begun to picket local businesses to remove *Playboy* and *Penthouse* from their shelves. And still the pro-ordinance feminists deny that it represents censorship, or that it fuels the right.

Socialists and other women and men committed to women's liberation should argue against such legislation and the move to the right it represents for a large sector of the women's movement. In New York, Madison and Berkeley, anti-censorship feminists have begun to organize to make it clear that it is not only civil libertarians who oppose such censorship.

The state has always been an

opponent of women's freedom. We cannot trust it to serve our interests now. Indeed, if such legislation passes, among its first victims would probably be feminist and lesbian/gay literature.

Nor will such laws help women working in the porn industry. Just as the nineteenth century campaign against prostitution drove it underground and thus increased the danger to prostitutes, so will laws against pornography.

TWO OPPOSED THEORIES

But the real argument here is between two opposed theories of women's oppression and women's liberation. Separatist feminists like Dworkin, MacKinnon and Women Against Pornography see pornography not as a symptom of the subordination of women, but as its actual cause, and they believe that all men are the enemy. Given such an analysis, it's not surprising that they should turn to repressive measures.

Socialists, on the other hand, see pornography as one of the symptoms—a very ugly one—of the subordination of women in the family and society, a subordination upon which capitalist society depends.

As a result, we believe that the way to change sexist ideas is through struggles which undermine the basis of such ideas in the conditions of our lives. We fight for the improvement of women's economic position, for reproductive freedom, and ultimately for socialism.

At the same time, we must reject all attempts to use the state to coerce people out of the attitudes they now hold. This is the method of reactionaries, not of fighters for liberation. □

Graffiti

Artful Dodgers . . .

More than 4,000 U.S. and other corporations are legally headquartered in the small Turks and Caicos Islands chain in the Caribbean. Why? Because they don't have to pay any taxes. It's all perfectly legal, says the islands' chief minister, Norman Saunders. "Since we don't recognize income tax evasion as a crime (and since there are no taxes), how can taxes be evaded here?" Saunders asked.

The companies don't have any big office buildings on the islands. They exist only as pieces of paper in the files of the islands' 13 lawyers and 10 accountants.

"We don't call this a tax haven, nor do we encourage tax-evaders," said the country's attorney general. "We prefer to be called an offshore finance center." □

Government Atrocity . . .

The United States government denied visas to four Salvadoran human rights workers last month, citing them for "terrorist activities." The four women—members of the Committee of Mothers and Relatives of Prisoners, Disappeared Persons and Politically Assassinated Persons of El Salvador, had been invited to Washington to receive an award from the Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Foundation.

The Salvadoran organization protests the Salvadoran government's reign of terror against thousands in the country—repression the U.S. has funded and supported.

But a State Department official told the foundation that the women were involved "in all kinds of violence, and that the committee itself was frequently stridently anti-American in its protests." □

Bedside Reading . . .

When reporters asked White House spokesperson Larry Speakes if Reagan had read a congressional report on last year's bombing of the U.S. embassy in Beirut, Speakes replied: "I don't think he's read the report in detail. It's five-and-a-half pages double-spaced." □

Searching for a thought . . .

The truth behind Indira Gandhi's murder

The recent events in India show very clearly the basic instability of the country and the fundamentally insoluble problems that it shares with developing countries around the world.

The Indian subcontinent, although in name a single unified country, is in reality criss-crossed by deep divisions of language, nationality and religion. The economist and U.S. ambassador to India, John Kenneth Galbraith, once spoke of the country as "a functioning anarchy," and the phrase more or less fits—only the gigantic country (750 million people) has become progressively less functional and more anarchic.

LANGUAGE

There is no one language in India. Forty percent of the population speaks Hindi, the most widespread language. Fourteen different languages account for 85% of the country, and hundreds more make up the remaining 15%. English is spoken by most of the ruling class and is the closest thing there is to a national language.

Religion is similarly divisive: Hinduism predominates, and 85% of India is Hindu, but in different localities, Islam, Sikhism, Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, Christianity and Judaism are prominent. Within Hinduism, the population is stratified into four major caste layers and the Untouchables. Individual small villages may be segmented into as many as 50 or 60 local, occupational caste groupings.

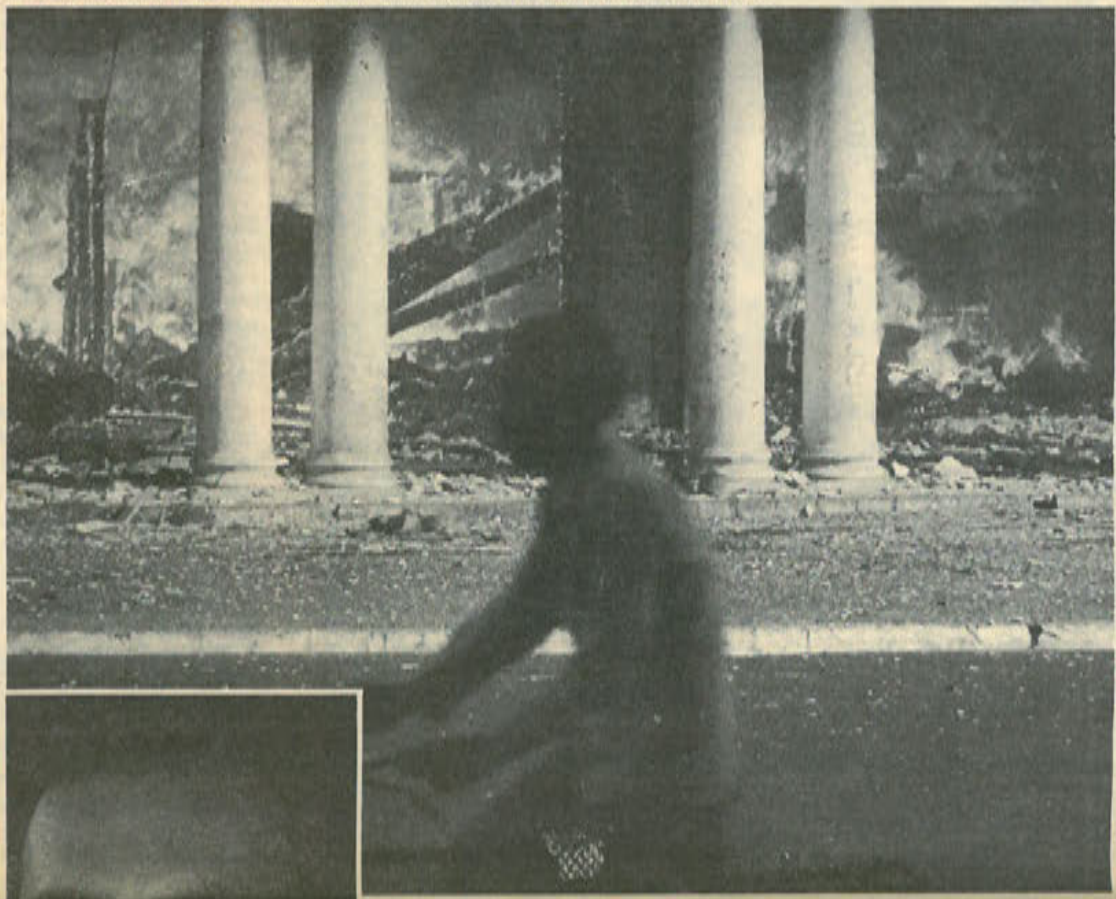
The many divisions within In-

Indira Gandhi's death triggered the most horrendous display of violence between different religious communities in India since partition in 1947. Every major Indian politician, including the new prime minister, Rajiv Gandhi, has denounced this inter-religious violence. Yet the policies of the Indian ruling class, and Indira Gandhi in particular, have been a major factor in creating these divisions. ELEANOR TRAWICK explains.

dian society have not only served to fragment the working class, which is located primarily within the textile and mining industries, but have been skillfully used by the various rulers to consolidate and maintain their power. The British Raj lasted as long as it did because the British were able to play off the Hindus and Moslems against one another and to obtain the cooperation of the highest castes.

Since India gained its independence in 1947, the different governments have tried to maintain their rule by essentially the same means. Mass pogroms of Moslems initiated by local Hindu fanatics and the state's continued aggressive stance towards Pakistan have kept the two main religious groups at each other's throats. Racist treatment of tribals roughly parallels the treatment of Blacks in the U.S. and confers the same advantages to the Indian ruling class.

Ironically enough, considering later developments, Indira Gandhi had covertly backed Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, leader of the Sikh separatist movement and encouraged his rise to power in the hopes of dividing and controlling the sect.



The economic crisis in India

The international economic crisis hit India early, in 1965, causing increased fragmentation and producing a militant workers' movement and various movements for regional autonomy. The intensified struggles within India required harsher measures from Indira Gandhi, who had at the same time to crush opposition to the government and opposition to her leadership from within the government. When a court ruled in 1975 that her 1971 re-election was fraudulent and illegal, she immediately proclaimed a state of national emergency and in effect became dictator—a culmination of a decade of increasing autocracy.

Gandhi's regional and national support was too weak for the "emergency" to be sustained, and in the 1977 election the Congress (I) Party was ousted by the Janata coalition, whose administration proved even weaker and more inept. Gandhi was returned to power in 1980 to preside over an even more precarious situation than before.

The crisis of the "emergency" gave birth to a series of workers' struggles. Both the Communist Party of India and the Communist Party (Marxist) headed useless and conservative trade union conglomerates. Some of the labor organizations formed in the upsurges of the late 1970s (such as, for instance, in the towns around New Delhi) chose to federate with existing CPI and CP(M) unions, but there was a strong tendency away from the old organizations.

At the Swadeshi Cotton Mills in Kanpur, workers chased out the CPI union organizers and formed a genuine rank and file organization that in 1979 wrested major

concessions from the government.

TYPICAL

The Sikh separatist movement is typical of the quasi-nationalist movements for regional autonomy that have threatened the Indian government. Sikhism, dating from the fifteenth century, combines aspects of both Hinduism and Islam.

Historically, the Sikhs have been anything but an oppressed group within Indian society. Sikhs are disproportionately prominent in government posts—the President of India has always been a Sikh—and in the military leadership. Sikhs are, for the most part, quite wealthy, especially when compared to the indigent mass of rural Hindus, and are concentrated in the prosperous Punjab state.

Only 2% of the population nationally, Sikhs are a majority of 52% within the Punjab. They provide a great part of India's food

supply and wealth and have long felt that India has squeezed out of them far more that it has returned.

The Akali Dal party vocalizes this dissatisfaction, advocating the secession of the Punjab to form an independent Sikh homeland that would be called Khalistan. Sikhs, as the numerical majority, would have the political power in the new country to an even greater degree than before, and would keep their produce themselves instead of subsidizing the rest of India. Thus, although the Sikh separatist movement threatens the stability of India and the power of the national government, it is itself anything but a progressive movement.



Above: Indira Gandhi regaling with the Reagans. Above right: Rajiv Gandhi, son of the assassinated prime minister.

A TORN RULING CLASS FACES INSTABILITY

In June, the Indian government laid siege to the Sikh's Golden Temple, the center of operations for the Akali Dal terrorist campaign, leaving over 600 dead. Moderate and militant Sikhs alike were enraged at the sacrilege—and at the brutal aggression of the government. The assassination of Indira Gandhi by her trusted bodyguards was a direct result of the June massacre, and in turn caused riots that left hundreds, mostly Sikhs, dead, and untold damage to property.

A shaky peace is more or less restored by now, and Indira Gandhi's son, Rajiv Gandhi, has succeeded her as Prime Minister, continuing the dynasty that has ruled India for 32 of its 27 years of independence. Indira Gandhi (no relation to Mohandas Gandhi) was the daughter of Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister. Elevated to power two years after his death, she surprised everyone with her ruthless political savvy.

Indira Gandhi had groomed her son Sanjay to succeed her, but Sanjay, as crafty and brutal a politician as his mother, died in a plane crash in 1980. Rajiv Gandhi is widely viewed as too weak and inexperienced to hold India together.

India's future is uncertain, but there is no question of pre-1965 prosperity and stability being restored. Like most developing countries, India has suffered tremendously from the crisis. Its steel and arms exports have

sagged, and the influx of multinational corporations has not had nearly the salutary effect that had been predicted.

CRASH

Just as Sanjay Gandhi, trained to be a skilled politician, lost his life when he flew his stunt plane too recklessly, so is Rajiv Gandhi, for most of his life a commercial pilot for Indian Airlines, likely to suffer a fatal crash at the helm of the Indian government.

It is clear that the centrifugal tendencies of the many religions and nationalities represented in the population will only increase. And the strike of 250,000 Bombay textile workers in January, 1982 showed that workers are by no means willing to passively accept their plight even after the restoration of the Congress (I) Party. As the economic struggle continues, such struggles will grow.

The central question is whether a revolutionary organization will form in India that can articulate the workers' generalized dissatisfaction with the system and focus the diffuse and virtually spontaneous labor struggles into a powerful and united social revolution.

If not, India will lurch from crisis to crisis, and fascist elements that are at present weak and disorganized may be able to leap into the breach and take power. But if a revolutionary socialist current can take hold, India may take the lead in a worldwide struggle of workers against the international ruling class. □



FAMINES DO NOT THEY ARE ORGANIZED

**'To give aid to a country just
are starving is a pretty weak**

Every other night since the middle of October, the pictures of starving children from Ethiopia have haunted the TV news.

To all but the most hard-hearted viewers, these extraordinary scenes of human devastation have been heart-wrenching. They represent one of the most obscene aspects of the world we live in—that billions of people go hungry every year.

The plight of Ethiopians is even more sobering when placed in the context of a much larger crisis that faces the whole of Africa.

IMMINENT

Directly across the continent from Ethiopia, on the western edge of Africa, Mauritania this year saw its lowest rainfall in 70 years. Grain production is down by more than 75% and 90% of livestock was lost in some areas. Famine is imminent.

And at the far southeastern end of the continent, Mozambique faces starvation in epidemic proportions—200,000 have died already of famine and its related diseases, a toll only slightly lower than that

of Ethiopia.

The numbers are staggering. More than three-quarters of African nations face severe shortages of food this year. Ten to twelve million people in Ethiopia and Mozambique alone face death from famine over the next ten years.

And this is still not the whole story. The pictures of bloated bellies and crying children that pass across our TV screens every few months hide a much larger problem—that two-thirds of the world's population does not have enough to eat.

The crisis in Ethiopia is only a part of a much larger, concealed problem. Famines in Ethiopia, Mozambique and a host of other nations are not isolated incidents, as the media would have it, but are built into the economic system of capitalism.

NATURE

For newscasters as well as for presidents, the explanation for famine is very simple—Mother Nature. Chronic hunger is blamed on crop failure due to climatic conditions—not enough rainfall—and other related explanations.

But there is little truth to any of this. Climatic conditions in the United States, for example, are just fine—but 10 to 12 million people go hungry in this country year after year.

The simple fact is that more than twice enough food is produced every year than would be needed to feed the entire world's population. The problem lies not in shortages of food, but in its distribution.

But doesn't the United States make up for this through foreign aid? Partly. But there are always strings attached.

The United States began its not-so-sterling record in food aid in 1812 when Congress approved a \$50,000 emergency food provision to earthquake victims in Venezuela. But, one economic historian says, even as early as this, there was a political twist to the aid—to encourage a revolt against the Spanish colonialists of Venezuela. (It failed.)

Since then, the politics of food aid have become more sophisticated—and more blatant. As President Ford's Secretary of Agriculture, Earl Butz, put it: food is a "weapon" and "a powerful tool in

ETHIOPIA: THE BACKGROUND

The famine that spread across Africa 10 years ago led in large part to the overthrow of Ethiopia's dictator Haile Selassie in 1974. But the regime the 1974 revolution installed had little to do with the marxism it claimed to follow. This fake socialism is all the more apparent now—in the midst of famine.

The first signs of famine were clearly visible in 1982, when a team of "development experts" from England—doubtless with their own interests in mind—recommended immediate food rationing and a heavy new emphasis on export crops.

POURED

But Ethiopia's military leader, Col. Mengistu Haile Mariam, ignored this not-so-charitable advice and poured 46% of the country's gross national product into military spending. When the famine began, the Ethiopian regime covered it up to keep from spoiling the revolution's 10th birthday party. Only after the \$200 million celebration were foreign journalists allowed into the areas stricken by famine.

Ironically, ten years before, the dictator Selassie had covered up the famine and refused to appeal for aid.

Today, Mengistu is, despite the labels, acting in exactly the same manner. Ethiopia—like other nations in Africa, whether they claim to be "socialist" or not—is subjugated to the world market and is forced to act accordingly.

DEBT

Ethiopia is currently paying up on a foreign debt of \$1.25 billion. Of the \$89.3 million they will pay back this year, nearly a third will be in interest alone. In an effort to meet its repayments, the regime is stepping up its investment in export "cash crops." These are rarely ever seen by their growers after they are harvested—the local elite takes over and sells them, usually at a big disadvantage, to western nations.

These export crops, which take up an ever-greater share of a developing country's economy, are often useless for feeding the population, anyway—in the case of sugar, coffee, and so forth. But they take precedence over food grown to feed the native population.

This is the case in Ethiopia. The country's chief export is coffee, which is grown on the richest soil in the country and is less affected by drought. While subsistence crops fell in production over the last two years, coffee production increased by 9%.

TOURISM

Tourism is also becoming an economic priority of the regime. So millions are pumped into the construction of high-class hotels while Ethiopians starve to death. While this, in the eyes of the U.S. media, adds up to the natural mismanagement one should expect from a "socialist" regime, the reality is very different.

Whatever the intentions of Ethiopia's leaders, they are forced into a position of subordination in the world economy—even if this means its people starve to death. □

September 1973, France—Tons of tomatoes were dumped to keep prices up. Butter, beef and wine were all to be dumped later. In 1975, 1,600 million apples were destroyed.



NOT OCCUR ORGANIZED

... because people
... reason...'

DAN ELLERMAN, United States National Security Council



our negotiating kit."

POWER

The CIA agrees. According to CIA documents at the time of the 1972-1974 famine, increasing grain shortages could give "Washington . . . virtual life and death power over the fate of the multitudes of the needy."

That's why Reagan and Congress have been so slow to respond to the Ethiopian crisis—not because they don't have the food, but because Ethiopia is aligned with the Soviet Union.

Only recently has Reagan, under public pressure, approved any emergency aid at all. Carter had cut it out altogether in 1979. But relief officials in Ethiopia say the contributions are far from adequate.

Reagan is fond of talking about how food aid would be better left to private hands. But this is precisely what causes the failure of food to get distributed to those who need it.

For a few giant agri-business firms in the U.S. and Europe, food is an industry—and a big one, bigger than cars, steel and chemicals put together.

Because they control over

Shortages "could give the U.S. a measure of power it had never had before . . ." In bad harvest years, "Washington would acquire virtual life and death power over the fate of the multitudes of the needy . . . Not only the less developed countries, but also the major powers"—CIA, 1974

three-quarters of the world's food production—and close to half the land on earth—they can control the way food is distributed to maintain their profits.

PROFITS

They don't want too much of any one food on the market, because this would bring down their prices and, thus, profits.

So they take land out of cultivation when prices for grain are dropping—and they pressure the government into paying farmers to not plant or to destroy food.

During the famine which hit Africa and southern Asia ten years ago, United Nations agencies said 8 to 12 million tons of wheat could stop the worst of the suffering in the famine-stricken countries. That time, the suffering was blamed on catastrophic harvests—which were, in reality, only 1% below those of 1971, a record year.

What very few people happened to mention was that the four largest grain-producing countries had taken fully a third of their growing areas out of cultivation in response to "overproduction" in the late 1960s.

That uncultivated farmland could have produced 90 million more tons of grain in 1972—seven times more than enough to answer the United Nations' pleas.

OBSCENE

The terrible scenes from Ethiopia on the TV news have nothing to do with acts of God, government mismanagement, or any other inadequate reasons put forward by the ruling class.

The misery and suffering in Ethiopia and elsewhere is the result of an obscene system that would rather see millions starve than see profits dip. □

WHO IS TO BLAME FOR WORLD HUNGER?

A number of people concerned about world hunger—from the Catholic church to liberals—will use the latest pictures of famine-stricken children to argue that, in part, the reason for starvation in other countries is overconsumption here in the U.S.

Six percent of the world's population in the United States consumes about a third of the world's food, the arguments will go, and, what's more, most Americans eat meat, a very inefficient form of calorie consumption (it takes about 20 pounds of grain to produce one pound of meat).

WHOSE FAULT

All these statistics are true enough, but whose fault is this really?

In fact, consumers have very little to say about what food is produced and how it is produced. The real say-so lies in the hands of a small elite which controls the United States' largest industry—food.

While only four percent of the U.S. population is directly involved in farming, three in ten are involved in the production, processing and distribution of food, which makes "agriculture" easily the largest industry in the U.S.

Small farming is a thing of the past. Only four percent of the farms in the U.S. produce half the food output of U.S. "agriculture." One percent of the feedlots in the U.S. raise 60% of the beef cattle consumed in the U.S., and three giant producers alone control 90% of the lettuce in American salads.

The biggest agricultural capitalists can manage this domination for two reasons:

first, they raise food products with the highest available technology, on a scale of investment completely beyond the ordinary farmer.

CONTROL

Second, the biggest producers control not only the actual food product, but every aspect of its production from supplying tractors, fertilizers and pesticides on the input end, to controlling processing equipment, packaging and even supermarkets on the output end.

Because of this enormous power, a handful of agribusinesses dictate what's on the supermarket shelves—whether small farmers or consumers like it or not.

And thanks to their allies in the government, they can respond to a "glut" of a particular food on the market by taking farmland out of cultivation—and get paid for it.

So huge parts of the world go hungry and Americans pay enormously inflated prices for food while a handful of giant corporations wait for food prices to rise before putting even half of U.S. food capacity into production.

If full U.S. agricultural capacity was utilized efficiently, all Americans could enjoy a healthy diet, and billions around the world could taste meat for the first time.

But where's the profit in that? □



"Bumper Grain Harvest Around World Raises Fear of a Food Crisis"—headline from the International Herald Tribune, July 5, 1977

CHARITY IS NOT THE ANSWER

The world discovered the misery and suffering of the people of Ethiopia by accident.

A British television crew got stopped in Ethiopia near a relief camp while en route to another assignment.

The film they sent back got played on television news programs around the world, and it created an incredible response.

Relief organizations were deluged with years worth of contributions in a matter of days, and suddenly there was food for Ethiopia and other African nations from the Reagan administration—who couldn't seem to locate it only weeks before.

HUMAN NATURE

All of which gives us a good deal to talk about when someone tells us that human beings are nasty, self-interested bastards who are only out for themselves.

Ordinary people were offended by the tragedy they saw on their television screens, and they re-

sponded.

Unfortunately, charity will not solve the problems that face Ethiopia and other famine-plagued nations.

It takes more than food and goodwill to feed Ethiopia's hungry. Because of Ethiopia's lack of economic development, much of the relief stocks sent from the west weeks ago have yet to reach the hungry.

WASTED FOOD

Says a U.N. official: "Now we have 54 aircraft waiting to be unloaded at an airport which normally can deal with just three or four planes a day. There are cases of wasted food."

Worse, various U.N. relief agencies and countries are competing with each other for p.r.—preferring not united efforts, but sending their own much-publicized shipments without the slightest idea how it will reach the hungry.

And relief workers doubt that the concern will last once Ethiopia, for one reason or another, drops

off the front pages, though the problem of malnutrition will go on for years, maybe decades.

And what of the famine and malnutrition that plagues the other countries of Africa?

IMAGES

"Their" famines don't make the television news, according to cynical news executives, because they don't have the "tremendous images of hundreds of people scrounging for food."

"In other countries, the situation may be just as desperate, but it's not quite as graphic because there aren't as many people in one place," says NBC's Jerry Lamprecht.

Ultimately, charity can't even approach the problems Ethiopia faces as low member on the world capitalist totem pole. The way in which Ethiopia develops—backward or forward—is first and foremost dependent on the power of western capitalism.

"I was impressed"

Dear Socialist Worker,
I recently picked up a copy of Socialist Worker and was very impressed, not only by the skill which was evident in the writing but also by the clear way in which you expressed your ideas (particularly the "Where We Stand" section) unlike some other papers in which you have to guess.

I have read a lot of communist works (i.e., Marx, Mao and Lenin) and they have only served to strengthen my belief that the current government and economic system is discriminatory and generally unfair.

With these things in mind, I would like to join the International Socialist Organization, and I would like you to send me any information or "propaganda materials" you can so I can become better ac-

quainted with the organization. I also hope to get a subscription to Socialist Worker, and I hope to hear soon.

J.F.
Walla Walla, WA

ILLUMINATING COVERAGE OF CENTRAL AMERICA

Dear Socialist Worker,
The coverage of the negotiations in El Salvador (November's *Socialist Worker*) was very important and illuminating. In criticizing the FDR-FMLN's strategy, it was quite clear in pointing out what the

strategy ignored—San Salvador's working class which was fighting for its own aims, apparently unrecognized by the guerrillas.

Lance Selfa
Chicago, IL



Israeli army in the West Bank.

The problem is Zionism

Dear Socialist Worker,
On November 15, the Jewish Student Union of the University of Rochester brought Rabbi Meir Kahane before an audience of approximately 900 people. Kahane is the founder of the Jewish Defense League (JDL), an extreme group of Zionists who oppose anti-Zionism with a vengeance that is responsible for the death of many innocent Palestinians and other Arabs.

They are very much akin to the KKK in their tactics: coercion, death threats, attacks on Arabs and other anti-Zionist individuals, bombs, and assassinations.

Meir Kahane also holds a seat in the Knesset—the Israeli parliament. He was voted in because of his advocacy of the expulsion of the Arabs from Israel, which is one of the ways his racism is incorporated into his platform.

In response to being asked why they would want to bring someone as violently racist as Kahane on to campus, the JSU explained that Kahane is "someone to be reckoned with."

But a candlelight vigil of about 30 people was held outside prior to the presentation, made up mainly of JSU members.

Another group also protested much more vocally and were much more political in their slogans. It was quite alarming to see the extent to which many people believe a misconception about the separability of Meir Kahane and Zionism.

This misconception is what needs to be reckoned with—or wrong conclusions can be drawn:

1. That violence against Palestinians in Israel is only being committed by racists like Kahane.

2. That were it not for racists, the Arab-Israeli problem could be solved.

3. That an attack against Israel can only be the result of an anti-Semitic (racist) ideology.

4. That Palestinian economic and political life are guaranteed by Israel.

Inside the auditorium,

Brian Kane
Boston, MA

Kahane was met with the cries of hecklers.

In his speech, Kahane admitted, "I understand Arabs. They understand me. Neither of us can understand Jews."

What Kahane means is that while many Jews agree to the existence of a Jewish state, namely Israel, they are unwilling to accept the logical conclusion of Zionism, which is that Israeli Arabs should lose all their political and economic rights (at best).

Or it could mean the physical expulsion or annihilation of all Arab inhabitants of Israel.

This should be no surprise. Zionism starts with the assumption that anti-Semitism cannot be overcome.

Israel keeps Palestinians who live there a minority—politically, socially and demographically. There can be no such thing in Israel as a democratic Jewish state—it is either Zionist or democratic.

Kahane understands this. He told the meeting: "Of course, there is a contradiction between Zionism which calls for a Jewish state and western democracy."

Kahane is quite clear about the objectives of Zionism.

There can be no peace in the Middle East as long as there is a Zionist state which necessitates the dispossession and expulsion of Arabs.

Meir Kahane is quite confident that in the next elections held in Israel his ideology will find root in larger numbers of voters. As the economic situation worsens, racist ideas will take hold of more Israeli workers, who are led to believe that it is the Palestinians working for less wages who are the cause of their problems.

Indeed, the options of expulsion and annihilation will become more acceptable. And in the end what Kahane says is the logical extension of Zionism.

The problem is not Kahane alone—the problem is Zionism.

Mike Ondrusek
Rochester, NY

Letters

Capitalism is a system of welfare for the rich

Dear Socialist Worker,

We have heard a lot in recent years from Reagan and the right about "welfare cheats," people mooching off unemployment, and so forth, but recently I got a taste of what it's really like. I am 28-years-old and have never been on unemployment in my life. Many times I have been out of work and out of money, but I was always ineligible due to some technicality.

This time I was laid off temporarily, with myself and the woman I live with expecting a child in a week and a half. Everyone knows there are a lot of expenses getting ready for a baby, and the thousand dollars I had managed to put away while working disappeared quickly when we started buying baby clothes, a crib, fixing up a room and all.

I thought that since everything was legitimate, there would be no problem—the unemployment would start coming in on time so that there would be enough money around. Well, I was laid off October 5. Here it is October 23 and I've yet to receive a penny. The baby is now three days overdue, we have no money at all, and when I went to apply for emergency food stamps, they told me I was ineligible because I would be getting "some income" during the month.

The "some income" is my unemployment check which amounts to \$156 a week. My monthly rent alone is over twice that amount. I paid more than that in taxes every week I worked. When I worked overtime I paid nearly twice that.

Last week I was forced to sit through an unemployment orientation which lasted 2½ hours. They told us what wonderful services we were eligible for, and they repeated



Poor and unemployed line up to collect free food.

over and over the sales pitch, "If you went out and paid for this service, it would cost you a lot of money, but we provide it absolutely free."

The instructor bragged about what great success they have had in placing unemployed people in jobs in the new hotels in town. He forgot to mention that they are all low-paid, non-union, dead-end jobs with no benefits.

The whole thing sickens me. I felt a great deal of bitterness watching Mondale and Reagan in the so-called debates. Neither of them has any concern whatsoever for working people Reagan will use our tax money to build beam weapons, Mondale would have

used it to quarantine Nicaragua. This system is built on the exploitation of the working class and you can't expect someone who benefits from that to try and change it.

Capitalism is welfare for the rich. Workers may not be rising up in arms against the system at the moment, but I do believe there is a great deal of resentment for the way workers have borne the brunt of this economic crisis. Things won't always be as they are, and we have to be ready when the tide shifts. Today that means beginning the job of building a socialist organization.

Brian Kane
Boston, MA

Frederick Engels and Karl Marx, like some utopian socialists before them, understood the importance of women's oppression. In a brilliant attempt to analyze its source, Engels wrote "The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State." DEBORAH ROBERTS discusses the contribution Engels made, examining both its limitations and its lasting worth.

THE ORIGIN OF THE FAMILY



Frederick Engels

There is a common myth that socialists are only concerned about economic inequality, and that therefore, marxism's focus on class relations and exploitation has nothing to say about sexual oppression and women's liberation. Even a cursory reading of socialist history dispels this myth.

The earliest utopian socialists of the nineteenth century saw the goal of socialism as the emancipation of men and women from every form of oppression—that is, the liberation of all humanity. It was Charles Fourier, one of the most important utopians, who coined the term "feminism."

DEGREE

In one of his earliest works, the *Manuscripts of 1844*, Marx cited Fourier's famous dictum that the degree of general emancipation within a society can best be judged by the position of women within it.

In 1884, Frederick Engels, a life-long admirer of Fourier, made the first major explorations by a marxist of the relationship between class exploitation and sexual oppression. His book, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, lays the essential basis for tying together the oppression of women in the private family with the economic organization of society.

In spite of inconsistencies and factual errors which the growth of anthropological research has made obvious, the importance of Engels' work for socialists today is as great as it was to our predecessors 100 years ago. *The Origin of the Family* approached the condition of women as a major—indeed fundamental—political issue for the first time. The best work by socialists for women's liberation owes much to it.

In the *Origin*, Engels sought to weave the discoveries of the American anthropologist Lewis Morgan into the framework of historical materialism. Morgan's 1887 book, *Ancient Society*, had attempted to outline the origins of class society. In his studies among the Iroquois Indians, Morgan delineated what were fundamental stages of human history. Engels (following Fourier) called these stages "savagery"



Women's role in the family is still at the heart of their oppression.

and "barbarism," in which neither private property, classes, the state, nor the monogamous family existed.

Using his own considerable knowledge of German history and classical antiquity, Engels aimed to show how the emergence of class society—"civilization"—required the destruction of these earlier forms.

KINSHIP

In describing the earliest kinship relationship, Engels argued that "the less the development of labor, the more limited the volume of producing, and therefore, the less the wealth of society, the more preponderingly does the social order appear to be dominated by ties of sex." Thus, in "primitive" society, production is organized within the framework of kinship relations.

The form of kinship relations passed through many different stages. Engels heaps contempt on the bourgeois notion that the family form characteristic of modern western society is not only moral, but also natural, and therefore necessary.

Engels was especially interested in the stage of group marriage, in which all the men of a tribe are married to all of the women, except their own mothers and sisters, and all of the women are married to all of the men, except their own brothers and fathers.

"Mother Right" prevails in this form of marriage—people's descent is traced through their mothers rather than their fathers, as is the case today.

Based on Morgan's study, Engels argued that group marriage was characterized by the absence of sexual oppression. In fact, women belonging to the same gens (or clan) tended to live together and to have especially high standing in their society.

PRODUCTIVE FORCES

Subsequent development of society's productive forces, in particular the domestication of animals, formation of herds and the organization of agriculture which depended on the harnessing of animals, resulted in the production of much greater material wealth than had previously existed. The growth of this wealth—the first surplus—resulted in the emergence of private property, as the men who tended the herds asserted their individual ownership of them.

In the earlier societies, when everything produced by the gens had been consumed by it, property was held communally, and women were responsible for gathering or producing more than half of the clan's subsistence. But the first surplus which could be controlled and exchanged was a source of differential social power and a growth of the part of the communal economy which had traditionally been the province of men.

Engels saw in these changes the strengthening of men's position within the household and

traced from them the ensuing changes in the kinship system which made possible the passing on of accumulated wealth from the father to his male children—children who had before this time belonged to the mother's gens: "The overthrow of the Mother Right was the world-historical defeat of the female sex. The men seized the reigns of the house . . . the woman was degraded, enthralled, the slave of the man's lust, a mere instrument for breeding children."

Thus, women's oppression arose as part of the same process that gave rise to private property, classes and the state.

Engels traces the private family through the succeeding stages of class society and concludes that socialism, by abolishing private property, will destroy the material foundation of the private family—the precondition for the emancipation of women.

THESIS

Engels' basic thesis is three-fold. First, women's oppression does not result from "human nature." Second, neither women's oppression for the family as it exists in class society is invariant or inevitable. And third, women's oppression coincides with and is integrally related to the rise of class society. This thesis and all that flows from it are central to our work as socialists.

We can see in Engels work that the founders of our tradition saw an essential relationship between the oppression of women and class exploitation. In fact, the two are so closely intertwined that they can only be ended as part of the same process.

At the same time, we need to be clear that there are limitations of Engels work. Modern anthropological research suggests that the peoples whose development

Morgan studied and on which Engels based much of his argument are in some ways atypical of "primitive" societies, and that even among the Iroquois, a degree of sexual inequality existed.

By its very nature, anthropological research of whatever vintage lends itself to speculative and conjectural interpretation, and we must approach it cautiously. In any case, the purpose of such research for socialists is to open the vistas of human possibilities—not close them. We can learn from the past, but we are not limited to it.

WEAKNESS

Another weakness of the *Origin* is its oversimplification of the complex functioning of the family under capitalism. Engels saw that the modern private family serves as an instrument for the transmission of wealth, and concluded that since the working class family has no wealth to transmit, it will simply disappear. This overlooks the fact that whether working class women work outside the home or not, they carry the burden of housework and childcare.

Nonetheless, Engels' corollary to this over-simplification is basically correct. He argued that "the first premise for the emancipation of women is the reintroduction of the entire female sex to public industry."

While working outside the home doesn't automatically free women from subordination in the family, it does give a measure of economic independence. Even more important, it takes us out of the isolation of the family and into collective relationships with co-workers. Wage labor makes it possible for women, as much as for men, to gain consciousness of collective exploitation and therefore the possibility of collective struggle. Only this consciousness and the activity which flows from it can free us from exploitation and oppression.

END

Today, capitalism has brought productive forces to a level where it is not only possible but necessary to end exploitation and oppression. Nearly half the working class in all developed countries is female. No socialist revolution can succeed without the fight for women's liberation by both men and women, and the integration of women in the fight for socialism on a basis of full equality.

Engels' essential argument is still central, because regardless of details of the precise origins of exploitation and oppression, their future is inseparable. □



"The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State," by Frederick Engels. Available from Hera Press for \$3.50, including postage.

WHERE WE STAND

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, Latinos, Native Americans, gays, youth—suffer the most. We support the struggles and independent organizations of oppressed people to strengthen the working class struggle for socialism.

BLACK LIBERATION

Our support for the struggle against racism is unconditional, and we oppose any attempt to subordinate this fight. We fight racism in all its forms, from institutionalized "legal" racism to the activities of groups such as the Nazis and the Ku Klux Klan.

We fight segregation in the schools and in housing, we support affirmative action, and we oppose racist firings and harassment. We support armed self-defense in the face of racist attacks. We support independent self-organization and the right to self-determination of the Black community. We demand freedom for all political prisoners.

WOMEN'S LIBERATION

We fight for women's liberation. We support equal pay and equal job opportunities for all women. We demand free abortion and an end to forced sterilization, and quality child care. We oppose all forms of violence against women including sexual harassment at work. Under capitalism the state intervenes to maintain women's subordination within the family, to maintain oppressive sex roles and her exploitation at work.

We support lesbian and gay liberation. We demand quality sex education in the schools, we are for lesbian and gay custody rights and the right to be open lesbians and gays at work, home and in school.

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 Poland to Puerto Rico, from Palestine to El Salvador. We support all genuine national liberation struggles. We call for victory of the Black freedom fighters in South Africa and Namibia. 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 those 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.

For more information about the International Socialist Organization (ISO) please write P.O. Box 16085, Chicago, IL 60616



What's ON

BALTIMORE
Ahmed Shawki on **Socialist Perspectives for the 1980s**. Friday, November 30.

Marxist Study Series on **Workers' Power**. Friday, December 7. Call 235-4630 for information.

BOSTON
Ty Miller on **The Crisis in Central America**. Sunday, December 2 at 7:30 p.m.

Joe Allen on **Reform or Revolution**. Sunday, December 16 at 7:30 p.m. Call 427-7087 for details.

CHICAGO
Joe O'Sullivan on **Germany: The Lost Revolution**. Saturday, December 1 at 7:30 p.m.

Glenn Perusek on **The Origins of American Communism**. Sunday, December 9 at 7:30 p.m.

Ahmed Shawki on **Trotsky's Marxism**. Party to follow. Friday, December 14 at 7:30 p.m. For details call 684-2260 or 549-8071.

CINCINNATI
Sharon Smith on **Women's Liberation and the Marxist Tradition**. Saturday, December 1 at 7:30 p.m.

Study Group on **Socialism and the State**. Thursday, December 6 at 7:30 p.m.

Fundraising Party. Saturday, December 8 at 8:00 p.m. Call 751-1871 for more information.

CLEVELAND
Deborah Roberts on **Wom-**

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en's Liberation: **The Marxist Tradition**. Sunday, December 9 at 12:00 noon. Call 651-5935 for details.

DETROIT
Film: **Up From the Ashes** and slide show on Nicaragua. Sunday, December 16 at 7:30 p.m. Call 527-2180 for more information.

KENT
Three-Part Study Series on **Marxism and the Party**. Call 673-1710 for details.

NEW YORK
Ahmed Shawki and Willie Vos on **South Africa's Black Workers Fight Back**. Monday, December 3, Columbia University at 12:00 noon. Call 280-7484 for details.

Allyson Smith on **Reproductive Rights**. Thursday, December 6 at Columbia University. Co-sponsored by Barnard Reproductive Rights Network.

Lee Sustar on **Marxism and the Party**. Sunday, December 16 at 7:30 p.m. Call 389-6170 for details.

PHILADELPHIA
Ahmed Shawki on **South Africa: Black Workers Fight Apartheid**. Saturday, December 1 at 2:00 p.m. Call 447-7459 for details.

ROCHESTER
Jack Porcello on **Religion and Revolution**. Sunday, December 16 at 7:30 p.m.

Mike Ondrusek on **Socialism and War**. Tuesday, December 18 at 8:00 p.m., Alumni Room, RIT. Call 235-3049 for details.

SAN FRANCISCO
David Siddle on **Striking Against Apartheid**. Sunday, December 2. Call 285-4057 for details.

SEATTLE
Thom Quine on **Famine: The Politics of World Hunger, a Socialist Perspective**. Saturday, December 8 at 7:30 p.m. at the Ethnic Cultural Center, 40th and Brooklyn. Call 324-2302 for more information.

New Year's Eve Party. Monday, December 31. Call 324-2302 for details.

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

— Karl Marx

If you want to help us change the world, join us.

There are ISO members and branches in the following cities:

- Baltimore, MD
- Bloomington, IN
- Boston, MA
- Chicago, IL
- Cincinnati, OH
- Cleveland, OH
- Detroit, MI
- Indianapolis, IN
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- Kent, OH
- Los Angeles, CA
- Madison, WI
- Minneapolis, MN
- Muncie, IN
- New Orleans, LA
- New York, NY
- Northampton, MA
- Philadelphia, PA
- Rochester, NY
- San Francisco, CA
- Seattle, WA

ISO National Office, P.O. Box 16085, Chicago, IL 60616

BOOK

Demystifying economic thought

Anyone trying to read Marx's important economic work, *Capital*, immediately faces two problems. The first is the sheer bulk of the work—three volumes, running to over 2,500 pages in all. The second problem is that an understanding of the economic ideas which influenced Marx is difficult to obtain.

The first problem cannot be solved except by perseverance. But in overcoming the second, I.I. Rubin's book, *A History of Economic Thought*, is a great help.

Rubin was a Russian economist who taught courses after the 1917 revolution. (In the 1930s he was killed in Stalin's purges). *A History of Economic Thought* was used as a text in those courses.

VIRTUES

One of its great virtues is that—since it is composed of Rubin's lectures—its chapters are short and very readable. The work is an excellent example of socialist scholarship precisely because it deals with a difficult subject in a way that non-specialists can understand. This does not mean ignoring or trivializing difficult concepts—but expressing them in a clear way.

Rubin's aim is to describe and analyze the ideas of the economists of rising capitalism, from sixteenth century English mercantilism to David Ricardo and the classical economists of the nineteenth century.

He rightly contends that none of these thinkers can be understood outside of the particular economic circumstances about which they wrote. So before explaining the ideas of any writer, Rubin discusses the economic conditions of his time.

Rubin says that Marx was the foremost authority of his day on the ideas of the economists of the sixteenth to nineteenth century. Rubin writes that throughout *Capital*, "both in his text and in his footnotes, Marx stops to select with evident enjoyment a particularly valuable thought that he has discovered in the early economists."

"No matter how rudimentarily or naively this idea may originally have been expressed, Marx nonetheless gives it his full attention and diligently analyzes it, so as to prize out the valuable hidden kernel that went unnoticed at first sight."

So Marx's *Capital* is not only an "original work," but also a synthesis and generalization

Review by Glenn Perusek



of the best ideas of previous economists.

For example, Marx relies on such writers as William Petty and David Ricardo to develop the labor theory of value.

Petty, writing in the late 1600s, was the originator of the idea that the value of any product is determined by the amount of labor time necessary to produce it.

INFLUENCE

David Ricardo, whom Rubin calls the theorist of the industrial revolution, was probably the most important single influence on Marx's economics. He wrote that the sole source of value in a good is the quantity of labor embodied in it. Thus, the only way a good's value could change is if the amount of labor time necessary to produce it changes.

However, Ricardo was not able to resolve the contradiction

between the operation of the law of value and the changes in the prices of goods.

Thus, according to Rubin, Ricardo could be an influence to both Marx, who developed the idea of the labor theory of value, and the "vulgar" economists who represented what Rubin calls the demise of the classical school.

Importantly, Rubin's book is not only of historical interest. The ideas developed in the period of the rise of capitalism form the foundation of bourgeois economics today. Thus, Rubin's criticism of Adam Smith can be ours against present day defenders of the system.

And it is Rubin's method—to always identify the economic interests which a writer is serving—which must be our starting point against bourgeois economics. □

Isaac Rubin's "A History of Economic Thought" is available from Hera Press for the special price of \$5.00.

Also, get Alex Callinicos' "The Revolutionary Ideas of Karl Marx" for only \$7.85.

FILM

"THE TIMES OF HARVEY MILK": COMPELLING STORY

by ALLYSON SMITH

"The Times of Harvey Milk" by Robert Epstein and Richard Schmeichen opens with a clip of Diane Feinstein's halting announcement of an amazing tragedy—San Francisco's supervisor Harvey Milk and Mayor George Moscone had been murdered. The suspect was their former colleague, supervisor Dan White.

The film, narrated by Broadway's Harvey Fierstein, weaves together interviews with those who knew Milk, and along the way we get to know him, too. Elected in the late 1970s to the San Francisco Board of Supervisors, Harvey Milk was the first open gay elected official in the U.S. After his murder by Dan White, he became an important gay martyr.

MIGRATED

Milk migrated to San Francisco in the early 1970s as so many gay men did and opened a camera store in the Castro—the gay ghetto. He ran for the Board of Supervisors three times unsuccessfully.

After "progressive mayor" George Moscone was elected and after the process of electing supervisors was changed from a city-wide system to election by district, Harvey Milk ran again. This time, building a coalition of the disenfranchised in the district, to everyone's amazement he won. The lesbian and gay community celebrated his victory as their own. It was a moment of pride. One of his supporters notes in the film, "Feeling good for Harvey was feeling good for yourself."

Milk's supporters felt that the lesbian and gay movement had come of age. It could now get people elected. It was legitimate. Harvey Milk, in a TV interview about what his election meant, said, "The establishment—rich, white, non-gay has to deal with me."

EX-COP

Dan White was elected to the Board of Supervisors in the same election. A white, straight firefighter and ex-cop, he ran a theme campaign reaffirming traditional "family" values. At one point he praised the merit of neighborhood baseball games and suggested that perhaps his district ought to play against a team from Milk's district. The statement was humorous and ominous at the same time.

In many ways, White and Milk were political opposites. Through the next 11 months Milk led various progressive fights including fighting the Briggs Initiative—the attempt to get gay teachers out of the schools.

White wanted to reform the system, also, in the vein of the traditional religious right, but

after months of defeat and depression, White resigned his post as supervisor. Changing his mind, he decided he wanted the post after all.

Angered at the mayor's refusal to reinstate him, White came to the City Hall armed with a gun and extra rounds of ammunition in his pocket and shot and killed George Moscone and then his own political rival, Harvey Milk.

Dan White got off with manslaughter and a six-year sentence. Earlier this year he was released.

As news of White's sentence spread through the lesbian and gay community, the city exploded. Rioting continued all night. City Hall was trashed, cop cars burned. But that's where it ended.

"The Times of Harvey Milk" is a compelling look at Milk's life from his childhood years to his death. Those who knew him remember his life with love and humor, anger and tears. TV clips lend an element of docu-drama to the film. And other archival footage, including two audio tapes—one made by Milk to be played in the event of his assassination, the other made by Dan White soon after the murder—are extremely effective and even moving.

QUESTIONS

But there are important questions the film doesn't address. What does it mean to elect someone into office and then go home thinking your job is done? Milk is an important gay martyr, but he is also representative of a growing trend in the lesbian and gay movement towards traditional involvement in the two-party system.

This year's gay pride marches around the country were decorated with few critical signs other than the ones bearing the slogan "Gay Vote." And at this year's Democratic Party convention, the Lesbian and Gay Democratic Club—making themselves more visible than ever before—were able to squeeze out a host of concessions from Democratic leaders in the form of statements in the party platform.

But getting rhetoric passed by one party or the other, getting openly gay candidates elected to office, even getting gay rights bills passed is not what gay liberation is all about.

"The Times of Harvey Milk" does a good job of depicting why people cared about this gay leader and of portraying his brutal murder. It doesn't tell the audience how to channel its rage to make things happen. □



on the picket line

N.Y. nursing home strikers angry

NEW YORK—After three months on strike, Benjamin Rodriguez is frustrated by his union's inaction.

"They treat us like little kids," Rodriguez said of Local 144 of the Hotel, Hospital, Nursing Home and Allied Services Union, which represents 2,000 striking workers at 11 nursing homes.

Scabs are starting to go back, Rodriguez said, one of 250 strikers at the American Nursing Home on Manhattan's lower east side.

"Trucks are making deliveries. The union should do something—that is what unions are for. But they just tell us to wait."

TOO LONG

Several strikers say the union already has waited too long. Local 144, affiliated nationally with the SEIU (Service Employees International Union), kept workers on the job after the contract expired March 30. The employers' bargaining group, the Southern Association, cut off payments to the workers' union health insurance and pension plan. But Local 144 officials

by LEE SUSTAR

stayed at the bargaining table rather than join the walkout by 52,000 workers of District 1199, the union which struck New York's private hospitals last summer.

"That was the union's first big mistake," said Angen Brito, a cook at the American Nursing Home for the last 14 years. "We should have been out there together."

District 1199 officials settled for a wage raise well below the rate of inflation, and the Southern Association wants a similar deal. "After 1199, all they offer is chicken feed," Brito said.

Local 144 officials said that a solidarity walkout with 1199 would have created "bad publicity" for health care workers. They use the same excuse to avoid calling for militant action on the picket lines. This passivity permits business as usual at the nursing home.

Even the reported beating death of a patient by scabs at Brooklyn's Shore View Nursing Home failed to stir any outcry. Strikers are drifting



New York hospital workers on strike this summer.

back to work, and many have filed for unemployment.

Union officials at the American Nursing Home picket line discourage strikers from appealing for solidarity to the Teamster truckers who deliver supplies to the institution.

ISOLATED

Local 144 President Peter Ottley maintains his reputation as a "leader in the Black community," getting favorable coverage in the *Amsterdam News*, New York's Black newspaper. Meanwhile, the nursing home rank and file

remains isolated. Picket lines are growing smaller as the weather worsens. Any hope of winning the strike depends on the rank and file.

"If the union doesn't get pressured, they hold back the strike," Rodriguez said. "They say: 'Stand behind this line. Don't do this.' And this is what happens."

"We had to hold off this strike until the very last minute," he said. "Now we are in very hard times. This is a very serious condition. We are going to have to fight it together." □

TALKIN' UNION BY JOHN ANDERSON

Auto contracts are already outdated

Contracts signed less than two months ago between the UAW and the auto companies are already showing signs of becoming obsolete. Workers hired shortly before the contracts were negotiated are now being laid off, and workers laid off before January 1, 1985, are not covered by the security clause. Workers are being worked overtime while others are being laid off. The economy is slowing down, and those laid off because of the declining sales are not covered by the security clause.

But the question of the duration of three-year contracts is being challenged by the Chrysler workers. A recent wildcat strike at the Jefferson Avenue plant over the discharge of a worker is an indication of some militancy existing in the ranks. No formal request for opening of the Chrysler contract has been made by UAW officials, but one can be expected any day. With Chrysler's 1984 profits at \$3 billion and the industry profits at over \$9 billion, the workers in the industry should understand how they are being ripped off.

MYTH

The right to strike under UAW contracts is a myth. The only strikable issues are production standards and wage rates. All other grievances must be settled in the plant or go to the umpire. The long-drawn out procedure and

negotiations make it almost impossible to get a strike authorization from the International union. There being two or more competing plants, work can be transferred from one plant to another. The plant with the most company-minded shop committee gets the work.

If we are to judge from the leadership of Local 15, we must come to the conclusion that those who led the opposition to contract ratification have now been whipped into line. President Joe Wilson of Local 15 says he has been called a communist. And in response to the assertion that the UAW is said to be one of the greatest unions in the U.S. today, Wilson replies: "That's true—the UAW has never been affiliated with the underworld, and yes, I'm very proud to be a member of this great union. It's a union where one gains a right to dissent on any issue. It's a union where freedom of speech is practiced at all conventions and at all meetings. Also, it's a union concerned about the welfare and the well-being and the working conditions of all its members. Yes, I'm proud to be a member of this union, and I want to be part of it and its future." (From the October issue of the *Fleetwood Organizer*.)

Joe Wilson, like many other critics of the International will say one thing in private conversation and the opposite for public consumption. Joe Wilson and most of the local leaders have an income



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

far above that of the workers in the plant. They have been going on junkets around the country at the workers' expense. The local executive board is now asking for a \$5 a month increase in expenses for all top officers and committee members.

CHANGE

There can be no change in the leadership of the locals of the International until a left-wing party can force them to break with their company-orientation. At Fleetwood, the workers wear coveralls with the UAW insignia embossed over that of the company. Trucks carrying auto bodies to Cadillac have both the insignia of the UAW and that of Fleetwood. Local 15 has all the markings of a company union. Who authorized this merger of the company and Local 15?

It is not surprising that this local of 3,000 members cannot get a quorum of 40 at its monthly membership meetings. I have met workers in the ranks who are capable of starting a revolt against the leadership. It is just a matter of time before this takes place. A recession in 1985 or 1986 can bring it about. We must look to the ranks to bring about any change. □

BARBERTON WILDCAT WINS

by DUKE FREDERICK
and KIT COOLEY

BARBERTON, OH—A wildcat strike at the Babcock and Wilcox plant here shows the power of rank and file workers when they are determined to use it.

On October 27, 1,700 members of Boilermakers Local 900 walked off the job protesting the firing of 18 janitors. The company claimed they needed to replace the janitors (covered under the contract) with a private janitorial firm to save \$250,000 a year.

On October 29, more than 100 strikers picketed, in spite of a restraining order issued by U.S. District Court judge Sam Bell.

Nine strikers were arrested and five found guilty of contempt of court by judge Bell.

But the entire local refused to go back to work while the five were in jail.

FORCED

After the strike had lasted four days, the company was forced to back down. They reinstated the janitors. Company and union spokesmen said that they had agreed there would be no reprisals against the strikers.

"This is a victory," said Charlie Lemon, president of Local 900. "The Company was forced to bargain during a wildcat strike. We would not resume bargaining as long as our people were in jail."

One worker said, "If they fire somebody else, the next thing you know, they'll want my job, too. We have to stick together."

A company spokesman said that the company lost approximately \$300,000 per day during the strike—more than the annual savings of \$250,000 they expected from replacing the union janitors.

The janitors have only been reinstated temporarily, however, until an arbitrator decides on the case.

If the decision is against the unionists, Local 900 will have to be ready to strike again. □



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NEW YORK DRYDOCK STRIKE

by LEE SUSTAR

BROOKLYN, NY—When Ronald Reagan started digging World War II battleships out of the mothballs for his military buildup, the Coastal Dry Dock Company had a boom in its business of preparing U.S. naval vessels.

But the extra profits were not enough for Coastal bosses. Over 850 workers of Local 12 of the IUMSWA—the ship repair workers union—struck November 1 over company demands that would eliminate job classifications, force workers to pay their own health and pension benefits and give an average wage raise of less than 25¢ per year until 1987.

NEW RULES

"Say you are a welder, and the foreman wants you to work on the rigging," said John Gilbert, a pipefitter at Coastal. "Under the new rules, he could make you do it, or you'd be fired—even if you don't know a thing about rigging. It is very dangerous to climb up there."

Strikers say Coastal's contract demands are an attempt to put in writing what existed in practice before the strike. "All of us do more work than we should," one striker said. "We each do the job of two sometimes three people. They've been doing this for months."

"They are attacking unions all over the country," Gilbert said. "Capitalists are concerned about making money, not about working people. The same thing is happening in England, with the coal miners' strike."

Some strikers say the U.S. Navy is behind both Coastal's decision to push for concessions and the extraordinary number of police who patrol the picket lines at Brooklyn's Navy Yard. One early morning found six cops surrounding a single picketer, who huddled next to a trash can fire.

SKILLED

Virtually no scabs have returned to work—but that is due more to the highly skilled nature of ship repair work than to strong union organization. Local 12 officials dictate picketing instructions to tiny work groups, and strikers are never told in advance when or where to show up.

Picket lines are sparse.

The strike "hotline" telephone number rings unanswered night and day. Negotiations are secret.

Gilbert believes workers must carry out the fight themselves. "You can't put capitalism ahead of people's lives."

"But America is the world's leading capitalist country. There is no easy escape from that." □

San Francisco restaurant workers face turning point in strike

by DAVID SIDDLER

SAN FRANCISCO, CA—The San Francisco labor council has supported a call from striking restaurant workers for a city-wide general strike. The call came at the end of the third month of a strike at some of San Francisco's most profitable restaurants.

Workers are bitter and frustrated, but many are showing great personal courage and sacrifice to win this battle. They are bitter at their employers who have banded together and pooled resources in order to destroy their jobs.

They are frustrated with the union's selective strike tactics which have failed to escalate the strike and throttle the business of other restaurant bosses who are supporting struck houses.

COURAGE

But their courage is evident to all. One example is of a worker at a Wharf restaurant who suffers serious kidney problems. He has been picketing at least 12 hours a day, 7 days a week. He has missed doctor's appointments to keep the line up. If the strike is defeated, he will lose all health coverage.

On November 27, the full labor council—which consists of 32 delegates from AFL-CIO unions, the ILWU and the Teamsters—made a unanimous recommendation to the policy-making executive of 17 union leaders to consider calling a general strike.

A general strike call could mean the beginning of a great labor effort to win this strike. However, if the strike call is seen primarily as a lever in the secretive negotiation process,



Picketing Pompei's Grotto, a San Francisco restaurant.

it could backfire and dash the hopes of the strikers. To really build even a half-way successful general strike, it would be necessary for striking workers to seek out other unionists and explain their case in person. For this to happen, many more workers need to support and take part in the picket line now and relieve restaurant workers from some picket duty.

If more outside people could be involved in this

strike, it would be possible to expand the strike to all the restaurants involved in the contract fight. It would also be possible for strikers to meet together and keep their own spirits up. So far there has been token restaurant adoption by some other unions. This and other support actions need to be a priority if a general strike is really to be sought.

Clearly it is hard to envisage

150,000 San Francisco unionists taking strike action, given the recent national situation. If this general strike call is just a grand-sounding threat, it could hurt the workers. But if the strike call is given substance by unions winning more workers to actively support the strike right now, it could be an important tool in winning this dispute—the start for changing the national picture. □

BOSTON RESTAURANT WORKERS FACE DOWN BOSSES

by MELANIE KUHN

BOSTON, MA—After nine days of picketing, the workers at the Club Casablanca, a restaurant in Cambridge, won a three-year contract and the health benefits they were seeking. Forty employees, members of Local 26 of the Hotel and Restaurant Workers Union, voted unanimously to go on strike when their contract ran out October 31.

VISIBLE

Management responded by closing down the restaurant. The strikers, however, remained highly visible through regular picketing and a mass rally which drew close to 70 people. This strategy was especially important in convincing the management to grant them a fair contract.

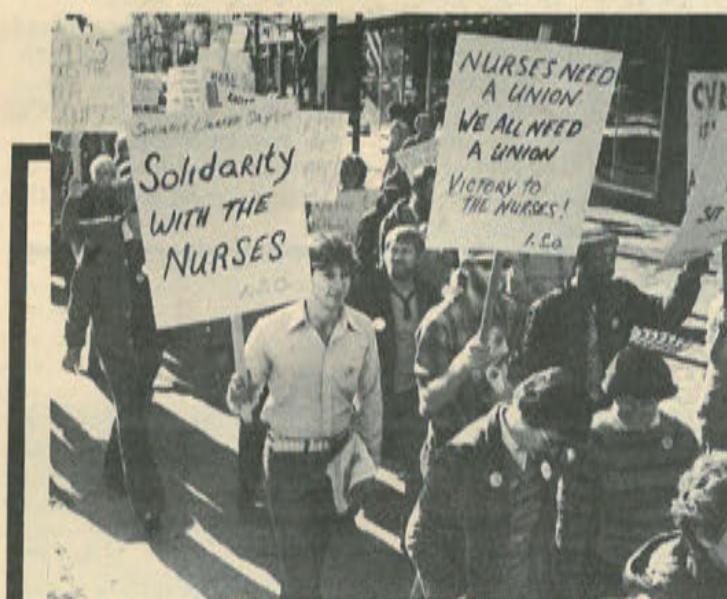
As negotiations for a new contract began, the employers claimed they could no longer

afford the health insurance plan and offered only a 10¢ per hour raise. In these times of rising health care costs, this amounted to a severe cutback.

The workers demanded a lowering of the hours required to achieve full-time status and an increase in the management's contribution to the health plan. A 25% increase was gained for both full and part-time employees. Workers also won two sick days over a three year period, and a 2% wage increase for the bar and kitchen staff in the third year of the contract.

OVERALL SUCCESS

While the wage increase was meager, the overall success of the Casablanca staff puts them in a position to fight for further increases in the future. □



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N.Y. COPS SHOOT AILING BLACK WOMAN KILLED FOR NOT PAYING

RENT

New York's racist police kill again, as Mayor Koch steps up the attack on city workers. DAN CAPLIN reports.

NEW YORK, NY—The brutal string of racist murders by the New York City Police Department continued on October 29, when six emergency service police officers, all white, raided the Bronx apartment of Eleanor Bumpurs and shot her dead.

The police were there to evict Bumpurs, 66, for being one month behind on her rent. Armed with plastic shields, a large restraining bar, mace and shotguns, they broke the door down and demanded that she vacate the apartment. Within minutes, officer Stephen Sullivan, a 17-year veteran, had shot and killed Bumpurs with two shotgun blasts.

AILMENT

The cops claimed Bumpurs threatened them with a household knife. This has not been proven, nor could it possibly excuse the killing. Given that she had a heart ailment and severe arthritis in her right leg, Bumpurs was clearly not a threat.

The Koch administration has responded by demoting two Human Resources Administration employees for having failed to obtain emergency rent payment or to contact Bumpurs' children prior to the eviction.

But the police themselves have been totally absolved of the killing. Black police commissioner, Benjamin Ward, stated that he has "found no evidence of racism" and that "the officers acted within departmental guidelines."

These guidelines were well-articulated by deputy police chief Lowe two days after the killing. He stated, "Our officers are not allowed to fire warning shots. They are trained to hit the target. Not a leg or an arm, but the main part of the body."

CRIMINALS

The NYPD remain the main criminals of this city. In 1976, a Black 15-year-old, Randolph Evans, was killed by police officer Robert Porsney "because he looked like he had a gun." Porsney was later acquitted after he was adjudged to be "insane."

In 1979, Louis Baez was killed by five cops after having

reportedly threatened them with a pair of scissors. Last year, Michael Stewart was beaten to death by transit police while painting subway graffiti. Those police officers were also acquitted.

Two sorts of proposals have been offered to remedy this situation. A House subcommittee led by Rep. John Conyers argued for a civilian police review board. The present review board has seven members who are all civilian employees of the police department itself.

This might be a vent for the outrage against the NYPD that exists among the city's Blacks and Hispanics, but it will not deter the police in the slightest. Given that murders such as those of Eleanor Bumpurs are justified by almost all those in power.

DEFEAT

The *Amsterdam News*, the city's main Black newspaper, argued for a Black mayoral candidate to defeat the racist Koch next November. "Taking the city politically," as they put it, could end the wave of police attacks. It's clearly the case, however, that the existence of a Black police commissioner didn't prevent the October killing, indeed he condoned it—nor would a Black mayor, as the present racist violence in Chicago shows.

According to a recent New York City Urban League report, one of every three Blacks in the city are officially living in poverty. In all aspects—health, housing, education and employment—their situation is much worse than in past reports. The police exist to enforce this poverty as the Bumpurs eviction murder clearly shows, and no board nor elections can change that.

DEFEND

In the neighborhoods, Blacks will defend themselves against police attacks, and all efforts at such defense must be supported. In the workplaces, Blacks can stop the general attack which the cops enforce—for it is the heavily Black workforces of the transit yards, hospitals and factories that keep this city going. □



MAYOR KOCH LEADS ATTACK ON NEW YORK CITY WORKERS

NEW YORK, NY—Four thousand municipal workers rallied here outside City Hall on November 7 to protest the Koch administration's refusal to bargain for a new contract for city workers.

The workers represented 2,000 teachers, firemen, public hospital workers, sanitation employees and others who have been working without a contract since June 30.

Ever since he defeated the

1980 transit strikes, Koch has prided himself on assaulting labor. This year, this has included helping to defeat the strike at 27 private hospitals and the transit authority's systematic attack on transit workers. From the municipal workers, Koch has demanded givebacks in benefits as well as offering a paltry 3% wage increase per year.

The unions involved—AFSCME, District 37, United Federation of Teachers and others—are demanding 9%-15% increases which would barely catch up with the past few years' losses caused by inflation.

REFUSAL

While the union leaderships are moaning about Koch's refusal to bargain, they haven't even considered strike action. At the November 7 rally, they merely called for Koch's electoral defeat next November, showing that they were willing to let their memberships work without a contract for almost a year and a half. This inactivity has only increased Koch's confidence to stall.

At present, the mood of the rank and file is generally passive, but it could change if those who see the need for a strike organize and argue for it on the job and at every union meeting. □

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