

Information, Education, Discussion

BULLETIN in Defense of Marxism

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Who We Are

The *Bulletin in Defense of Marxism* is published monthly (except for a combined July-August issue) by the Fourth Internationalist Tendency. We have dedicated this journal to the process of clarifying the program and theory of revolutionary Marxism—of discussing its application to the class struggle both internationally and here in the United States. This vital task must be undertaken if we want to forge a political party in this country capable of bringing an end to the domination of the U.S. imperialist ruling class and of establishing a socialist society based on human need instead of private greed.

The F.I.T. was created in the winter of 1984 by members expelled from the Socialist Workers Party because we opposed abandoning the Trotskyist principles and methods on which the SWP was founded and built for more than half a century. Since our formation we have fought to win the party back to a revolutionary Marxist perspective and for our readmission to the SWP. In addition our members are active in the U.S. class struggle.

At the 1985 World Congress of the Fourth International, the appeals of the F.I.T. and other expelled members were upheld, and the congress delegates demanded, by an overwhelming majority, that the SWP readmit those who had been purged. So far the SWP has refused to take any steps to comply with this decision.

"All members of the party must begin to *study*, completely dispassionately and with utmost honesty, first the essence of the differences and second the course of the dispute in the party. . . . It is necessary to *study* both the one and the other, unfailingly demanding the most exact, printed documents, open to verification by all sides. Whoever believes things simply on someone else's say-so is a hopeless idiot, to be dismissed with a wave of the hand."

—V.I. Lenin, "The Party Crisis," Jan. 19, 1921.

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A VICTORY FOR THE NICARAGUAN REVOLUTION

The two-month cease-fire accord reached by Nicaragua's Sandinista government and the Washington-backed contra rebels constitutes a significant victory for the revolutionary workers and peasants of Nicaragua. The destruction brought about by the war and the need to divert a large percentage of the national budget into military expenditures to combat it have been major factors in Nicaragua's economic difficulties. If the cease-fire holds and leads to a permanent accord—which is far from a certainty at this point since key negotiations still lie ahead—it will become possible for the people of that country to devote their resources to economic reconstruction and the fulfillment of human needs.

However, important as this victory is, it is not the end of the problems facing the Nicaraguan people and their revolution. Nor will the apparent end of the contra war be the end of attempts by the United States to intervene in the region to overthrow Sandinista power. The passage of a new contra-aid package by the U.S. Congress only days after the signing of the cease-fire accord makes this unambiguously clear. The Reagan administration has even moved to tighten up the trade embargo, making it illegal for the first time to import Nicaraguan products—such as coffee—which are processed in third countries.

The U.S. ruling class was profoundly split on the question of continuing its proxy military battle in the form of the contra war. One wing simply didn't believe that this strategy could succeed, while another wanted to pursue it to the end. This division manifested itself in a series of extremely close votes in Congress on the question of military and other forms of aid. It is clear that the failure of Congress to give consistent and reliable support was one of the decisive factors—along with the demonstrated military superiority of the Sandinista army—in the decision made by the contra forces themselves to call a halt.

But the U.S. ruling class is not split in its hostility to the Sandinistas or in its opposition to the Nicaraguan people's right to self-determination. Both the Democratic and Republican parties are determined to do all they can to undermine the building of an economy in that country which can be responsive to the needs of the masses, rather than to the profits of the imperialists. In order to

attain the cease-fire, the Sandinistas were compelled to make considerable political concessions to reactionary forces both inside and outside the country. There is no doubt that these new legal channels—as well as other means, legal, illegal, and extralegal—will be used in a continued effort to undermine the Sandinista revolution. We can also be sure that the CIA and other agencies of the U.S. imperialist government will give whatever help they can to such efforts.

It is particularly important in any analysis of these events to focus on their broader international context as well. While a victory has been achieved, it is a victory in one specific battle. The overall war—for the right of self-determination in Central America as a whole—is still being fought in earnest. In the long run, the future of the Nicaraguan people is dependent far more on what happens in the rest of the region (and in the rest of the world) than it is on events in Nicaragua itself.

The struggle of the FMLN continues in El Salvador, with a new upsurge of the most right-wing elements demonstrated by the recent elections there. The U.S. government considers Honduras open territory for carrying out military maneuvers. Troop strength in Panama has been increased and new economic sanctions threatened as part of Washington's effort to overthrow the government of Manuel Noriega.

Supporters of the Sandinistas in the U.S. and activists who are determined to defend the right of the Nicaraguans and other Central American peoples to decide their own future, free of interference from Washington, cannot let down our guard. We must remain vigilant and active in opposition to the policies of our government in the region.

End the Economic Blockade of Nicaragua!

No More Contra Aid!

No U.S. Aid to the Duarte Regime in El Salvador!

**U.S. Troops Out of Panama and
All of Central America!**

**Self-Determination for
All the Peoples of Central America!** ■

DISARMAMENT AND SOCIALIST REVOLUTION

by Samuel Adams

The June 11 disarmament demonstrations in New York City and San Francisco are being organized on the basis of the following themes:

- a) Complete nuclear disarmament (including bio-chemical weapons) by the year 2000.
- b) Substantial steps toward general and complete conventional disarmament.
- c) A firm policy in support of national self-determination and nonintervention between nation states.
- d) A substantial reduction of global military spending and the transfer of funds to development purposes and the promotion of a new international economic order.

(Letter of February 26, 1988, from Leslie Cagan, on behalf of the National Steering Committee, National Coalition in Support of the Third U.N. Special Session on Disarmament.)

According to Michael Myerson, executive director, U.S. Peace Council, the demonstrations "would send a message to both parties [the U.S. and the Soviet Union] . . . (to) build down rather than up, and turn away from the suicidal spiral of the arms race."

Can U.S. imperialism be pressured to respond affirmatively to such a "message"? Will the governments of the world "cooperate" in the United Nations and fashion agreements for general and complete disarmament? Or does the road to genuine peace lie in an entirely different direction?

The Nature of Imperialism

The age of imperialism dawned for the U.S. in the Spanish-American War of 1898, when the U.S. grabbed Cuba, Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines. From that time forward, U.S. capitalists competed with the bourgeoisies in other countries for access to raw materials, precious minerals, markets, pools of cheap and exploitable labor, communications networks, vital shipping lanes, and spheres of military and political influence.

U.S. investments grew worldwide. The biggest jump occurred in the 1970s, when U.S. assets abroad skyrocketed from \$118.8 billion to \$513.3 billion (Economic Report of the President, 1982, Table B-105). Overall, American corporations and investors possess well over \$1 trillion in assets abroad.

In Central America alone, 2,000 or more U.S. firms have over \$5.3 billion invested. The figure for the Caribbean basin is \$23.1 billion. The U.S. has billions more in outstanding bank loans to these nations. It owns or controls much of their best agricultural land and mineral resources. And

Central American markets absorb about \$2 billion worth of U.S. exports each year.

Over two hundred U.S. firms have \$3 billion in direct holdings in South Africa. In addition, U.S. companies have about \$6.4 billion worth of stock in South Africa. U.S. banks have \$4.6 billions in loans to that country. Thus, total U.S. financial interests in South Africa amount to \$14 billion. In addition, 10,000 U.S. companies trade with South Africa.

The Philippines is also of great concern to Washington, not only because of its strategic location and the U.S. bases there, but also because U.S. corporate interests have over \$1 billion invested in that country.

These foreign investments pay off handsomely. In the last forty years for every one dollar invested, there has been an average return of at least five dollars.

It is bipartisan policy to see to it that this global financial empire which the corporations and banks have constructed (and seek always to enlarge) is well protected. That is why we have a Pentagon budget of \$300 billion a year, why fifty-five cents of every income tax dollar goes for military spending, and why the U.S. has 550,000 troops in 32 countries maintaining 359 bases and military installations (if foreign military bases to which U.S. forces have access are included, the figure is closer to 1,500). *Under no circumstances will U.S. imperialism agree to disarm itself and jeopardize its worldwide holdings.*

Of course, the arms buildup is also big business. The Pentagon has 22,000 prime contracts and 100,000 subcontractors who grow rich from military procurement. (One nuclear power aircraft carrier alone costs \$3.6 billion.) During the period of nuclear stockpiling, the big corporations received military contracts costing the people of the U.S. \$3 trillion.

The U.S. government is not one bit reluctant to annihilate large numbers of people to maintain the "American empire." It killed two million Koreans in that country's war and one-half million Asians in the Indochina war. In one of the most savage acts in history, 100,000 innocent civilians were incinerated on August 6 and 8, 1945, when atomic bombs were dropped by the United States on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. (Deaths due to exposure within 5 years exceeded 273,000 people.)

The U.S. government has a long history of intervening in other countries to protect its investments and spheres of influence. Since World War II: Truman intervened in Greece to prevent the victory of the left there; Eisenhower engineered the overthrow of Arbenz in Guatemala; Kennedy saw

to it that Patrice Lumumba was eliminated in the Congo; Johnson went into the Dominican Republic to prevent the "communists" from gaining power; the CIA under Nixon was behind the ouster of Allende in Chile; and Reagan invaded Grenada to hammer the last nails into the coffin of the revolution there, after Bernard Coard toppled Maurice Bishop.

Of course, there have been failures along the way, the defeat of U.S. imperialism in Vietnam being the most outstanding. Others include the stalemate in the Korean war, the Bay of Pigs debacle, and the abrupt pullout from Lebanon following the deaths of 241 U.S. marines there.

Among the goals which U.S. imperialism has yet to attain is the destruction of the Nicaraguan revolution. Both Democratic presidents Kennedy and Johnson went on record as saying that the United States would never tolerate "another Cuba" in the Western Hemisphere. The Sandinista revolution took place under Carter, but because it was so soon after Vietnam he was unable to intervene to prevent it.

As Reagan nears the conclusion of his term of office, the Sandinistas retain power. The U.S. has organized over 200 interventions since World War II to keep the lid on revolutionary developments, but it hasn't been able to invade Nicaragua. That is due primarily to two factors: the military strength of the Nicaraguan people and their resolute determination to defend their revolution regardless of what sacrifice it entails; and, secondly, the popular opposition within the U.S. and throughout the world to Washington's interventionist policies in Central America.

The INF Treaty and U.S. Military Strategy

Sponsors of the June 11 demonstration see the Intermediate Nuclear Forces (INF) treaty as a significant breakthrough which they believe can now be parlayed into major new nuclear arms agreements. They attribute the pact to the mass outcry for peace and they are confident that with more of the same, further advances toward ending the arms race are assured.

Of course, the U.S.-Soviet accords on the INF were welcomed by people throughout the world. But it would be the worst kind of illusion to imagine that in entering into the agreements, the U.S. government was moving in a new direction. Unfortunately, the leopard has not changed its spots and imperialism has not gone pacifist.

The fact is that there is some new thinking in the Pentagon on how U.S. imperialist interests can be more effectively protected from a military point of view. The signing of the INF fits right in with those evolving plans.

In January 1988, in a landmark Pentagon study by the Commission on Integrated Long-Term Strategy, a doctrine was announced which is designed to guide Pentagon strategic thinking, planning and weapons procurement for the next twenty years.

The commission's report, which was ordered by former secretary of defense Caspar Weinberger, was the result of a 15-month study by the top staffs of the Pentagon and the National Security Council.

Among those serving on the commission were John Vessey, recently retired chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Henry Kissinger, and Zbigniew Brzezinski.

The report declares, "In the changing environment of the next 20 years, the U.S. and its allies will need to improve their ability to bring force to bear effectively." The commission urges the U.S. to move away from an overreliance on nuclear weapons in favor of a new generation of precise or "smart" missiles, which are non-nuclear but packed with devastatingly high-yield explosives.

But the key to the report is the emphasis it places on concentrating more resources—high tech missiles, rapid deployment forces, and military advisors—in the third world.

The report declares:

In the past 40 years all the wars the U.S. has been involved in have occurred in the countries of Asia, the Middle East, Africa, Latin America and the East Caribbean. Our ability to persevere in such wars is always questionable.

The commission is not giving up on nuclear weapons. It is not ready to rely solely on conventional weapons, however modernized. It believes nuclear weapons can be utilized successfully in protracted nuclear wars. The commission is also united on the need to militarize outer space, which it holds will be a "critical battlefield" in all future conflicts, both conventional and nuclear.

It is within the context of this perspective that the INF treaty, which eliminates intermediate range nuclear missiles, must be viewed. That treaty and one reducing long-range strategic ballistic missiles are in keeping with the central priorities established by the Pentagon: preventing successful revolutions by oppressed peoples fighting colonial and neocolonial domination, and overthrowing such revolutions where they occur.

This strategic military line does not always call for the direct introduction of U.S. troops. The arming of repressive regimes around the world and the training of their military forces is the preferred course. As a concomitant proposition, contra mercenaries are funded, as in Nicaragua and Angola, to disrupt, subvert, and remove governments Washington considers a threat.

All of this requires an enormous military buildup by the U.S. "Ending the arms race" and "giving peace a chance" are options U.S. imperialism will never consider. To move in such directions would not only imperil the capitalists' empire abroad but would hasten an end to their rule at home.

Interimperialist Rivalries and Disarmament

When the imperialist countries finished dividing up the world, they proceeded to redivide it. The slaughter of tens of millions of people in World Wars I and II were the results. At the end of the second world war the economies of both the

victor and the vanquished countries lay prostrate. Of course the exception was the United States, whose territory was spared the bombing and the destruction.

This period was described as the beginning of "The American Century." U.S. imperialism's strength was infinitely greater than that of any competing power. It looked to solidify its hegemony on the world scene as never before.

But today U.S. imperialism faces enormous problems. The world's markets are glutted and competition from rival capitalist nations has served to reduce the share of the markets available to U.S. capitalism. Washington is being challenged by Japan and West Germany and even South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, and Hong Kong for the world's markets. The U.S. runs tremendous trade deficits and foreign investors, especially the Japanese, have acquired huge assets in the U.S. This includes not just plants and real estate but banks as well. (In fact, Japanese capitalists now own seven of the ten largest banks in the world.) Foreign interests now own \$1.5 trillion in U.S. assets—about 10 percent of the total—and the figure is mounting by at least \$150 billion per year.

The U.S. government's relations with the other major capitalist countries have a contradictory character. On the one hand, the U.S. wants their collaboration in confronting the Soviet Union around the globe and their support in suppressing colonial revolutions. On the other hand, the U.S. views them as rivals in plundering the world's wealth.

U.S. imperialism intends to deal with these rivals, as it does internationally with all countries and social forces, from a position of military strength. Although the question of disarmament is sometimes simplistically viewed as one involving only the relationship between the United States and the Soviet Union, the truth, of course, is far different. Capitalist nations, after all, armed themselves to the hilt well before the Russian Revolution.

The U.S. government has no crystal ball to determine what its relations with other imperialist countries will be in the years to come. But one thing is certain: even though interimperialist rivalries may not be today as dominant a factor as they were, say, immediately prior to 1914 or immediately prior to 1941, they persist. And Washington will take no chances. It will maintain and upgrade its military arsenals to assure its primacy in the world of imperialist competition.

For a Nuclear-Free World?

Some advocates of disarmament concede the difficulty of getting the world's nations to agree to destroy all their arms. So they seek to regulate or limit the arms race by focusing on the demand for a nuclear-free world.

This is certainly understandable, given the fact that the U.S. nuclear stockpile today has the destructive power of one million Hiroshimas and that an estimated 140 million people in the U.S. would be killed in the first 24 hours of a nuclear

conflict. People know generally that a full-fledged nuclear war would result in the extinction of civilization. Some 5,700 disarmament groups have formed in the U.S. to help avoid that calamity.

The problem is that U.S. imperialism has no intention of eliminating its nuclear stockpile. It is a pipedream to believe that in dealing with the Soviet Union, colonial revolutions, and imperialist rivals, it would rely solely on conventional arms, where it would undoubtedly be at a great disadvantage.

Even if they are never again used in combat, the big nuclear arsenals are needed by Washington to intimidate, threaten, and bully. They inhibit the Soviet Union from rendering more help to revolutionary movements and governments, even if the Soviet Union were disposed to do so. (The U.S. used its nuclear muscle in the 1962 Cuban crisis to force the Soviet Union to remove its missiles, while U.S. missiles remained pointed at Cuba.) They also force the Soviet Union to develop corresponding weapons at an enormous cost to and drain on its economy.

"Tactical" nuclear weapons are an indispensable ingredient to the strategy for waging counterrevolutionary wars. Even if they have not yet been used in that capacity, they can and will be if the situation permits. (Of course, a mass anti-intervention movement and world public opinion are key factors that imperialism would have to take into consideration before such weapons were employed.)

The Pentagon's strategic considerations are based on responding to any contingency. For example, they do not exclude the possibility that sometime in the future the Chinese government could change its orientation (with or without a political revolution) and ally with the Soviet Union. Thus, the Pentagon planners think that the U.S. might be confronted with the massive armies of China and the Soviet Union arrayed against it. Under this scenario, and a myriad of others that could be dreamed up, they regard it as unthinkable for the U.S. to limit itself to conventional arms.

Can the U.S. Be Pressured to Disarm?

Disarmament advocates maintain that the U.S. government can be *forced* to disarm, at least with respect to nuclear weapons, if only enough people will join their movement and participate in its mobilizations and other activities.

I have tried to show above that *the capitalist class in the U.S. cannot afford to disarm without risking its continued class rule*. For this reason, no amount of pressure will force it to disarm.

Leon Trotsky made the point this way: "Pressure can never induce the bourgeoisie to change its policy on a question that involves its whole fate" (*Challenge of the Left Opposition*, 1923-25, p. 215).

On the other hand, pressure focused on opposing imperialism in the specific wars it wages can weaken and inflict defeats upon it. Vietnam is a case in point. The critical battlegrounds of the present period are the struggles of the peoples of

Central America, South Africa, and the Palestinians to win their freedom and self-determination. *A negative feature of the disarmament movement is its tendency to draw attention, as well as energy and resources, away from these central confrontations with imperialism.*

Ideological Differences Over Disarmament

The Communist Party, USA (CP), of all the groups on the left, is the most enthusiastic supporter of the disarmament movement.

The CP envisions a world in which the Soviet Union and United States live together in "peaceful coexistence." Under this idyllic view, as the relationship between the two "superpowers" stabilizes, more and more arms agreements can be negotiated. By the year 2000, all nuclear arms disappear. "Regional issues" can be resolved if only there is mutual will. The best way to realize this dream for the future, in the CP's view, is to elect Democrats to office and build disarmament demonstrations. (Jesse Jackson, the CP's preferred candidate for president, calls for an annual military budget of \$270 billion because "America must maintain a strong defense.")

The CP's press never tells its readers that wars are inevitable under parasitic capitalism. Disarmament is projected as occurring *under* capitalism. There is no need to fight for its overthrow as a prerequisite to forging a world at peace, the CP holds.

But the CP has now been joined by the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) and by Socialist Action (SA) in uncritically endorsing the June 11 demonstration. To be sure, these latter two groups come at the question of disarmament from a different perspective. But they have ended up in the same place.

For the SWP, this is no surprise. The SWP has openly abandoned much of its Trotskyist heritage, including the revolutionary socialist position on disarmament, and replaced it with a pragmatic hodgepodge. The SWP sees a disarmament demonstration being built; it notes that there is a secondary anti-intervention theme; so it uncritically joins in. It doesn't bother with the "small print" in the call to the action.

Trotsky dealt with the question of disarmament in the *Transitional Program*. He wrote:

Disarmament?—But the entire question revolves around who will disarm whom. *The only disarmament which can avert or end war is the disarmament of the bourgeoisie by the workers.* But to disarm the bourgeoisie the workers must arm themselves (emphasis added).

That is how revolutionary socialists have historically dealt with the question of disarmament. *They have rejected disarmament schemes as calculated to lull workers into believing that imperialism can be pressured or persuaded to disarm, or reformed into pacifism.* They have empha-

sized that disarmament is possible *only* as a result of the destruction and elimination of capitalism.

Anyone calling for disarmament under capitalism has an obligation to explain how this is supposed to take place. Disarmament will presumably occur either on a unilateral basis, i.e., in the case of our country, U.S. imperialism will disarm itself without waiting for other countries to do the same; or on a multilateral basis. There is no mention of unilateral disarmament in the call for the June 11 demonstrations. The perspective is clearly to achieve disarmament *agreements*, particularly between the United States and the Soviet Union. That is why Michael Myerson talks of sending a message to "both parties."

But Marxists have no interest in sending messages to "both parties" to renounce wars. Instead the objective is to remove the one class that *causes* wars. While capitalist rule continues, wars will not be prevented by pacifist appeals for "general and complete disarmament" by all countries. Rather, Marxists urge workers and their allies to oppose the policies of *their own imperialist ruling class*, which inevitably intervenes and wages wars against colonial peoples (and imperialist rivals). The most effective mobilizations for such antiwar and anti-intervention struggles are those focused on *specific* imperialist violations of the right to self-determination (e.g. Cuba, Vietnam, Nicaragua).

Instead of the June 11 call for "a *substantial* reduction of *global* military spending"—which would apply to imperialist and nonimperialist nations alike—our demand must be for an end to *all* military spending by *the capitalist-run U.S. government*, with the money to be used for jobs and social programs.

The fundamental difference between the approach of revolutionary socialists and pacifists to the question of disarmament is this: We see the issue in *class* terms and seek to dispel illusions that disarmament is possible under capitalism; while they view disarmament as a matter of *relations between countries* and try to attain it under capitalism.

In endorsing June 11, Socialist Action makes no reference to this basic position. Since 1985, Socialist Action has been helping organize demonstrations where disarmament demands are given co-equal importance to anti-intervention demands. The only exception to this parity occurred in 1987, when a broad national coalition called the April 25 actions on Central America and Southern Africa themes. Socialist Action protested. *They wanted the nuclear freeze added.* The San Francisco demonstration ended up with the two national demands and with nuclear freeze and jobs added in smaller letters.

What leads Socialist Action to insist on including a call for disarmament when the effect is to diffuse the focus on anti-intervention and anti-apartheid demands? A statement on disarmament made 54 years ago is relevant here:

Disarmament is not a means against war.
. . . "General" disarmament, even if it

could be realized, would only mean the strengthening of the military superiority of the more powerful industrial countries. "Fifty percent disarmament" is not the road to complete disarmament but to absolute 100% re-armament. To present disarmament as "the only means to prevent war" is to mislead the workers for the sake of a common front with petty bourgeois pacifists (*War and the 4th International*, Pioneer Publishers, July, 1934, emphasis added).

Socialist Action has in fact formed a "common front" with the pacifists in support of disarmament demands. They have done so uncritically and without differentiating their own views in the process. They apparently believe they can make some organizational inroads by taking a pro-disarmament stance. But in the long term any such gains, if any, will come at the price of confusing a clear, principled, revolutionary proletarian outlook on the question of war and peace, and a weakening of the ability to win the best activists to that position.

Against Sectarianism

There have been notable struggles against the use, operation, and deployment of *specific* arms systems.

The most important of these was the successful fight to prohibit the testing of nuclear weapons in the atmosphere, ocean, or outer space. The July 25, 1963, treaty between the United States and the Soviet Union resulted in greatly reducing the world-wide peril of radioactivity.

When the U.S. decided to deploy 464 Cruise and 108 Pershing II missiles in Europe, people throughout the world demonstrated to prevent this extremely provocative and dangerous act.

Current drives to stop all further nuclear testing and terminate star wars warrant all-out support. Such campaigns, of course, differ fundamentally from *general* disarmament slogans like "Give Peace A Chance" and "Eliminate All Weapons," which are prominent in organizing for June 11.

Disarmament advocates espouse a wide range of views. The more militant among them can sometimes be won to a revolutionary perspective. Their class origins and loyalties may be crucial. Trotsky wrote in the *Transitional Program*:

It is necessary to differentiate strictly between the pacifism of the diplomat, professor, journalist and the pacifism of the carpenter, agricultural worker, and charwoman. In one case, pacifism is a screen for imperialism; in the other, it is the confused expression of distrust in imperialism. . . . Bourgeois pacifism and patriotism are shot through with deceit. In the pacifism and even patriotism of the oppressed there are elements which reflect on the one hand a hatred of destructive war

and on the other a clinging to what they believe to be their own good—elements which we must know how to seize upon in order to draw the requisite conclusions.

In the early days of the nuclear freeze movement, sectarian attitudes developed toward it stemming from a perception that it was created by the Democratic Party leadership to disorient the anti-war movement. This idea was advanced not only by ultraleft elements but also by the SWP, at least during 1983-84. (The SWP delegation at the Emergency National Conference Against U.S. Military Intervention in Central America/the Caribbean in September 1984 kept silent during the discussion and debate on the crisis in Central America and the need to mobilize to deal with it. At the final session of the conference, however, when the agenda point was implementing the call for national demonstrations, the SWPers suddenly found their voices. One party member after the other took the floor, but not to speak about the anti-intervention struggle. Instead they tore into the nuclear freeze movement—which had barely even been mentioned at the conference!)

The anti-intervention movement, especially, needs to have good relations with disarmament groups in order to gain their participation in demonstrations against U.S. war policies in Central America. Sectarian attitudes toward these groups will not help to achieve this objective.

Anti-Intervention Contingents on June 11

This leads to the question of how, if at all, revolutionary socialists should relate to the June 11 disarmament actions in New York and San Francisco.

It is obvious that there will be tens of thousands of activists attracted to these demonstrations whose conceptions and motivations are different from those of the demonstration's organizers. It is essential to address the legitimate concerns of these rank-and-file militants, and through signs, banners, and slogans to help move the action in an anti-imperialist direction.

There can be no consideration of sponsoring, endorsing, or building these actions around their general disarmament demands. But the call to the actions does make reference "to protest acts of military intervention," protests which are to be directed "especially to the U.S. government." Several paragraphs later Central America, Southern Africa, the Middle East, and the Asia-Pacific regions are mentioned.

By participating as a *separate anti-intervention contingent*, together with other anti-intervention forces, we can raise the banner of self-determination and the right of oppressed peoples to break free from imperialist control. This will advance the struggle to weaken imperialism and eventually overthrow the capitalist system that breeds it. That is the road—and the only road—to genuine peace and disarmament. ■

March, 1988

SELF-DETERMINATION FOR THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE! FOR A DEMOCRATIC SECULAR PALESTINE!

Statement by the National Organizing Committee of the F.I.T.

The Palestine question is once again in the international spotlight due to the heroic struggles of youth in the West Bank and Gaza Strip (areas generally referred to as the "occupied territories," although in fact the whole of Israel represents occupied Palestinian territory) and the atrocities committed by the Israeli army and Zionist settlers. An interrelated combination of key elements, coming together for the first time, has opened fresh possibilities for political education and action around the issue of self-determination for the Palestinian people:

- A vigorous and sustained Palestinian uprising;
- The emergence of a new young generation of fighters who can revitalize the leadership of the struggle;
- Strong support from Palestinians within the Israeli state and by those living in nearby countries such as Syria and Jordan;
- An increased questioning among certain layers of Israeli Jews concerning the actions of their leaders;
- A first-time public criticism of Israeli government policies by Jewish leaders and organizations in the U.S.—a development of the greatest significance to revolutionaries in this country since it provides unprecedented opportunities for discussion and activity.

It is important, in light of these events, to review and reaffirm a clear revolutionary Marxist position on Palestine.

The Fourth Internationalist Tendency rejects, as the Trotskyist movement in the U.S. has traditionally done, the legitimacy of the Zionist state of Israel, which has subjugated the people of Palestine. While this is the worst of its crimes, it is far from the only one. Secular and Sephardic Jews suffer discrimination within Israel's own borders. The Zionists have allied themselves with the most right-wing governments and with the counterrevolutionary efforts of imperialism around the world—supporting South Africa, for example, and funneling arms to the Nicaraguan contras when the U.S. Congress cut off military aid. By falsely identifying Judaism with such reactionary and oppressive policies, Zionism places the lives of Jews in this region in grave danger.

We call for the creation of a democratic secular Palestine, in which Jews and Arabs of all religious convictions could live with equal rights and opportunities.

Origins and History of Israel

The state of Israel was created by Anglo-American imperialism to serve as a regional police state. The goal was to protect imperialist interests in the Middle East against the rising tide of the colonial revolution. No one consulted the Palestinian people before their country was first carved up in the 1947 United Nations partition and then obliterated by the 1948 war led by Zionist terrorists.

Even the initial Jewish immigration into Palestine was not entirely voluntary. Those great "friends of the Jewish people," the United States and Britain, severely restricted immigration of survivors of the Holocaust at the end of World War II. Most were given two basic choices: languish in "displaced persons" concentration camps or go join with the Zionists in the creation of Israel. The Zionist organizations in the imperialist countries were complicit in this compulsion. Only the Socialist Workers Party campaigned in the U.S. for opening this country's doors to Jewish refugees—before, during, and after the war.

The state of Israel is completely dependent on U.S. support. Since its creation the U.S. government has directly contributed \$96 billion to the Zionist state. Other imperialist powers have contributed as well, and West Germany has paid substantial reparations. Zionist organizations in the imperialist countries have raised billions more. Lucrative trade agreements have given very favorable conditions to Israeli goods. The relative prosperity of Israeli Jews is totally artificial, absolutely dependent upon this massive aid.

The state of Israel is fundamentally a racist theocratic state. Land ownership is restricted to those considered "authentic Jews" by the orthodox rabbis. The Israeli supreme court has more than once had to rule on who is "really a Jew." Secular Jews suffer discrimination at the hands of the orthodox-dominated state and vigilante thugs who periodically crack down on such offenses as attending movies on Friday night and the sale of razor blades.

The Zionist government has retained many of the repressive laws inherited from British colonial rule, using "emergency powers" to deny fundamental human rights not only to Palestinian Arabs but dissident Israeli Jews as well.

This colonial-settler state has evolved into an apartheid-like regime. The "occupied territories" have been transformed into South Africa-style bantustans, giant reserve pools of cheap labor for Israeli industry and agriculture. The residents of

Gaza and the West Bank are essentially stateless persons with no civil rights. Social services are virtually nonexistent.

Questions of Program

The explosion in the "occupied territories" has caused considerable alarm among the imperialists and sections of the Zionists. The "left" Zionists, recognizing the growing threat to the very existence of the Zionist state, now favor negotiations with even the hated Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). This current hopes to find support for the creation of a docile Palestinian ministate based on Gaza and the West Bank.

Such a ministate would merely represent the codification of (and, it is hoped, Palestinian acquiescence in) the bantustan character of these areas. There is no viable national economy to support such a ministate. It would be completely dependent on the employers and merchants of the Israeli state—a state which some rate the fourth greatest military power in the world.

The partition of Palestine is no more just or viable than the partition of Ireland. The majority of the residents of the "occupied territories" are either refugees, or descendants of refugees, from other parts of Palestine, driven out by the Zionists during the 1948 war. Self-determination for the Palestinians cannot be restricted to the scraps of the "occupied territories." Just as in Ireland and South Africa, self-determination in Palestine can only be realized through a binational, nonsectarian state.

World public opinion has stirred protests against Zionist atrocities. Many are raising the slogan of "Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories." This slogan captures the elementary desire of the residents of these territories for liberation from the brutality of their occupiers. It is a valid, democratic demand that revolutionary Marxists can support. We share the desire to bring some immediate relief to those being beaten and shot by the Israeli troops.

But there is also a conscious effort by the "left" Zionists, more conservative elements within the Arab community, and even some of the imperialist politicians, to *misuse* this idea to promote a return to the situation before the 1967 war, or perhaps the project of the ministate. This, as noted above, would solve nothing. It would aid the forces which want to maintain the Zionist regime, and would lead to the continued oppression of the Palestinian people. It is impermissible for genuine revolutionary forces to link the slogan of "Israel Out of the Occupied Territories" with any idea of a *permanent* governmental compromise which would leave the state of Israel intact. It is, on the contrary, essential to vigorously combat any such reactionary idea.

Another proposal which has gained currency as part of a proposed solution to the Palestinian question is that of an international conference, under the auspices of the U.N., which would include

Israel, the PLO, and the "superpowers" (i.e., the U.S. and the USSR). This, however, is not an idea which should be raised by supporters of Palestinian self-determination in this country. It may well be that negotiations of some sort between Israel, the PLO, and others will take place in the future. A decision to participate in such a process is one which the representatives of the insurgent Palestinian masses have every right to make. But to raise it as a *demand* fosters illusions which can only weaken the struggle.

Neither the United Nations, nor the United States, nor the Soviet Union, are interested in furthering the Palestinians' right to self-determination. They all have a clear position favoring the continued existence of the state of Israel. The U.N. is the institution which created Israel in the first place; Washington, of course, is its biggest backer; and the Gorbachev regime in the USSR is far more interested in establishing better relations with Washington to advance its own narrow interests than it is in the rights of the Palestinians or any other oppressed people.

The only kind of negotiations, no matter what governments or political forces may be involved, which can lead to positive results in this situation are those that take place as a result of serious blows being dealt to the Zionist state and its supporters around the world. The rebellion in the "occupied territories" and the actions in support of the Palestinians which have taken place throughout the world have begun such a process. The task now is to deepen and extend these mobilizations, and to raise basic demands which address, simply and clearly, the elementary human rights of the Palestinians.

Certainly a key demand for supporters of Palestinian self-determination in the U.S. should be "End All U.S. Aid to Israel." Without the prop of U.S. support the rotten Zionist regime would collapse. As noted before, new possibilities exist today to raise and popularize this idea. However, we should not underestimate the political pressures which continue to make it a position advocated by a small minority.

Many otherwise progressive-minded people become emotional and irrational about the Zionist state, falsely seeing it as giving Jews a measure of security after the horrors of the Holocaust. But more and more are coming to recognize that Israel, far from offering security to Jews, is a deadly trap. More and more are becoming conscious of how the "socialist-minded" Zionists of 1948 have built an apartheid horror. Revolutionary Marxists have to patiently explain the trap of Zionism and defend the Palestinians' right to self-determination, no matter how difficult this may be in the United States today.

The goal of a democratic secular Palestine is not an impractical dream. It is, on the contrary, the only workable solution to the crisis of the Middle East, the only vehicle for bringing justice and peace to this long suffering region. ■

NEW YORK RALLY CALLS FOR REHABILITATION OF MOSCOW TRIALS VICTIMS

by Bernard Daniels

On Saturday, March 19th, over two hundred people filled the auditorium of the New School for Social Research at 65 Fifth Avenue in New York City to attend the first public rally in the U.S. held under the auspices of the Moscow Trials Campaign Committee. The U.S. committee is part of an international effort to seek the exoneration and rehabilitation of all the victims of the infamous Moscow show trials, which were organized by Stalin in the 1930s as a means of wiping out his political opponents.

Naomi Allen, one of the coeditors of the *Writings of Leon Trotsky*, chaired the meeting. The roster of speakers included Paul Siegel, professor emeritus of Long Island University and author of several books on cultural subjects from a Marxist point of view, who represented the committee. He dwelt on the history of Stalinism, the monstrous purges during the Moscow trials, and the need to support the courageous people in the Soviet Union who are demanding the rehabilitation of all the victims of the Moscow trials.

Siegel was followed by Morris Schappes, editor of *Jewish Currents*. Schappes, who was fired from his job as a teacher at New York City College in 1941 and then imprisoned for over a year for his refusal to become an informer, recently achieved vindication when City College formally apologized for its wrongful behavior and honored him with a dinner. Schappes devoted his remarks to examples of anti-semitism in the Soviet Union and also pointed to

recent progress being made there for cultural Jewish life. A brief statement by Juliet Ucelli, representing the New York Marxist School, stressed her support for the objectives of the rally and expressed concern that the full historical truth of the Moscow trials and their origin be revealed. Conrad Lynn, former counsel to the NAACP and now 80 years old and still active as an attorney in civil liberties and civil rights cases, was also a featured speaker.

Marilyn Vogt-Downey, translator from the Russian of *Notebooks for the Grandchildren* (the memoirs of Mikhail Baitalsky currently being serialized in the *Bulletin in Defense of Marxism*), related some aspects of the memoirs which refer to the victimization of Left Oppositionists and others under Stalin. Her appeal to the audience for funds to help carry on the work of the committee resulted in over \$1,600 being raised on the spot.

The final speaker was Esteban Volkov, the grandson of Leon Trotsky. Volkov did not speak of the personal tragedies that beset his family but of the political ideas which Trotsky and the other Bolshevik leaders fought for and the potential that exists to raise them again in the USSR. The text of his talk appears below.

Messages of support to the campaign were read from such figures as Noam Chomsky, Phillip Berrigan, and Bill Henning. Anyone who would like to participate in the work of the Moscow Trials Campaign Committee should contact the committee at P.O. Box 318, Gracie Station, New York, NY 10028. ■

THE TRAIN OF HISTORY

by Esteban Volkov

The original idea of socialism in its empirical form and later in its most articulate and scientific form, that is to say, Marxism, arose in response to the social conditions of exploitation, injustice, and alienation of the human being. These conditions, which have prevailed in all societies accounted for by history and have taken their most sophisticated and extended forms in capitalist society, still persist unfortunately in postcapitalist and presocialist societies with their statified economies under bureaucratic dominion.

This is the text of comments made to the New York rally organized by the Moscow Trials Campaign Committee on March 19.

The first triumphant Marxist revolution took place on this planet approximately seventy years ago. This triumph, based on the uprising of the Russian workers and peasants, was directed successfully by the Bolshevik Party, which was headed by men of great talent, boldness, and indomitable faith in the socialist cause: Lenin, Trotsky, Bukharin, Zinoviev, Kamenev.

The monopoly and the centralization of power in the hands of the Bolshevik leadership, which previously had been a key element in the victory of the revolution, later opened the door for Stalin to establish and consolidate his dictatorship. In addition, there was the isolation of the revolution, the depoliticization and exhaustion of the

masses, the weakening of the revolutionary leadership as a result of Lenin's death, together with the fact that Trotsky was surrounded by the counter-revolutionary bureaucracy.

Stalin created the most implacable dictatorship and tyranny known in modern history, betraying the foundations and principles of Marxism. Instead of using the truth as a battering ram and revolutionary weapon, he imposed lies and falsification of history as his *modus operandi*. Instead of abolishing the exploitation of man by man, he sent from ten to fifteen million Soviet citizens to work as slaves in Siberian "work camps." Instead of a respectful and comradely treatment of Lenin's Bolshevik companions, he set up a monstrous parody of justice with his Moscow trials frame-ups, as a result of which most of them were executed in the basement of Lublianka prison or exiled to Siberia.

Two years later, Leon Trotsky, the organizer of the Red Army and close collaborator of Lenin, was also murdered in Mexico City by a GPU agent. For the "dictatorship of the proletariat" Stalin substituted "the dictatorship over the proletariat," penetrating and invading every area of Soviet life with an absurd and asphyxiating bureaucratic control so that now, seventy years after the October revolution, the Soviet Union is still trailing behind the rest of the industrial world in many scientific and technical fields, as well as in housing and the general standard of living of its citizens.

And as a grand finale, Stalin committed high treason against his own country, the land of Lenin, when in his paranoia he decapitated the Red Army by executing its most experienced and brilliant generals and officers only a short time before the Nazi invasion, putting the survival of the Soviet Union in peril. The list of Stalin's crimes is too long and varied to waste more time on.

It is shameful for humankind that in our time we have had to witness political regimes such as Stalin's. They have to be openly denounced and wiped out of any future page of history.

If Gorbachev and his leadership really want to succeed in achieving perestroika and glasnost and return to the road of authentic socialism, it is a *sine qua non* that light should be cast on all of the crimes of the Stalinist era. All the names of the innocent victims have to be made known and must be cleared. The historical truth must be reestablished. Among this long list of victims we have to emphasize once more the indomitable Russian revolutionary and Marxist theorist Leon Trotsky. He was a key protagonist in the triumph of the Russian Revolution, and afterwards he became its fiercest defender in a deadly fight against the Stalinist counterrevolution. Leon Trotsky became the most

calumniated and persecuted revolutionary on the planet. Until now, glasnost has not succeeded in freeing him of all these calumnies and neither has it allowed the publication of his writings and free discussion of them inside the Soviet Union. Leon Trotsky will show us how far glasnost will advance. *The avalanche of lies, falsifications, and calumnies that have covered the Soviet Union and other communist countries for more than half a century have to be exposed and eliminated forever!* Free and open discussion has to be established as it was at the beginning of the Bolshevik Party.

In history there is little place for experimentation. Most of the events have to be solved as they occur. That's when one understands the extraordinary force and richness of the open, direct, and violent polemics that took place within the ranks of the Bolsheviks during Lenin's time, when ideas emerged as incandescent iron ingots which were impetuously hammered out by the blacksmiths of the revolution—forging the tools for its victory. This was the great secret of the Bolsheviks' strength and success. The mediocrity of Stalin's court of adulation came later.

The last pages of history have shown us that the abolition of private property in the means of production is not a magic formula that will automatically take humanity into an earthly paradise. A second element of great importance to reaching socialism is the solution of the equation of power. As with property, it has to be shared by all the working sectors of society. If the power is only in the hands of one social group, chances are that this group will sooner or later keep the best and the most of what society offers and will not have very much concern about what is left over for the remaining groups. The third important factor is to establish an adequate level of abundance which will permit the fulfillment of all human needs. Scarcity will always generate stratification of society with inequalities on a national and international scale. The fourth factor will be the prevailing of internationalism. "Socialism" behind national borders will always be a potential source of conflicts and wars.

Man came out of the cave seminaked. He has reached the moon, has freed the energy of the atom, developed the super computer, and has created a new science of genetic engineering. Is he then unable to create a more just and harmonic social organization on this earth? Or has human history reached its last page?

Until the present, the train of history has not reached its final destination: authentic socialism. It had to make a previous stop in an inhospitable desert. Fortunately, little by little, the train is resuming its forward motion. ■

SOCIALISTS AND THE 1988 ELECTIONS

by Bill Onasch

Once again that hearty quadrennial blossom of democracy—the presidential election—sprouts up from well-fertilized roots. With the same techniques that are used to promote detergent powders and denture adhesives, U.S. citizens are being prepared by the mass media for their choice of Chief Executive. We are reminded every day that this is our chance to exercise our rule. We are told that we should thank God we live in such a democracy and are warned that skipping the opportunity to participate in this sacred rite of autumn is an affront to God and Country, a slothful capitulation to apathy such as paved the way for the fall of the Roman Empire. Nevertheless, it is estimated that about half of those eligible to vote will find other, if not better, things to do on the first Tuesday of November.

Revolutionary Marxists understand that elections are peripheral to decision-making in our society. Electoral politics as practiced in the U.S. today is a con game, a sham to maintain the illusion of majority rule. Without that illusion the great majority could not be enlisted so effectively in the maintenance of a system which in fact promotes their own oppression. Fundamental decisions are not made by the majority. They are imposed by a tiny ruling elite, working out of sight, and without accountability to the electoral process.

But revolutionary Marxists are also a tiny minority today. The big majority of the working class, oppressed nationalities, and family farmers—the real silent majority—still believe in electoral politics. Even though they may distrust politicians and abstain from voting in particular elections, most U.S. citizens still accept the idea that the system is a good one, that some day it may be utilized in a positive way. So revolutionary Marxists cannot simply ignore the electoral shellgame.

The Jesse Jackson Phenomenon

The resilience of the bourgeois two-party system in this country, the way it is repeatedly utilized to reinforce the illusion of democracy, is demonstrated once again this year by Jesse Jackson's run for president. His campaign is shaking up U.S. politics, winning enthusiastic support not only from Blacks and other oppressed minorities, but among substantial numbers of white industrial workers and family farmers. His concept of a "Rainbow Coalition" of all the exploited and oppressed has aroused a new sense of solidarity. His opposition to intervention in Central America, his "Worker's Bill of Rights," his call for a moratorium on farm foreclosures, have struck a responsive chord

among millions affected or threatened by the ruling class offensive against working people.

The Jackson campaign is an important political barometer. It indicates dramatic shifts in the consciousness of large layers of U.S. workers and farmers and demonstrates a mass base which is looking for an alternative to traditional politics in this country. It is a significant event, which cannot be simply or easily dismissed. Unfortunately, Jackson's "Rainbow Coalition" is not, and never will be, the alternative sought by many of those who constitute his electoral base.

Jackson seeks to take the solidarity and fight-back spirit which he has tapped and channel it into the Democratic Party. His support to the Democratic Party is not an accident, not a misguided aberration on the part of an otherwise determined leader of the oppressed and exploited. On the contrary, it is fundamental to Jackson's political strategy—*which is completely and thoroughly reformist*. "The [Democratic] party is the people," according to the Rev. Jackson. But that is precisely the myth which must be destroyed before any effective politics can be practiced by working people and the oppressed in the U.S. today. Jackson does not help to break through the myth; he helps to perpetuate it. He loyally supported Mondale in 1984 and there is no doubt that he will support whomever the Atlanta convention puts up against Bush in 1988.

But let us suppose this were to change. Suppose Jackson were to break from the Democratic Party? Some socialists, such as the organization Solidarity, decline to support Jackson as a Democrat and instead urge that he break with the Democrats and build an independent Rainbow. This ignores a crucial fact: the problem with Jackson and the Rainbow Coalition is not purely a formal one, and it cannot be resolved so easily. Jackson is not today the leader of a genuine mass movement, which has an existence independent of him, a set of demands, and a determination to fight for those demands. If he were, and if such a formation somehow found itself incorrectly oriented inside the Democratic Party as a result of an erroneous electoral policy, then a call for that movement to break with the Democrats would have some substance.

The Rainbow, however, is not much more than the electoral machine of Jesse Jackson. What would it accomplish for this *electoral machine* to break with the Democrats? The answer is, nothing at all. Rainbow politicians want to work within the system and reform it. Their program—as opposed to their rhetoric—doesn't differ substantially from other liberal Democrats. A break by the Rainbow with the Democratic Party could only represent an attempt to

set up a new bourgeois-reformist political machine *outside* instead of *inside* the Democratic Party. Such a formation would be of no value from a working class point of view.

Revolutionary socialists, who view politics in terms of class relations rather than individuals and personalities, have long recognized the Democratic Party as a capitalist party. We have understood that support to this party means crossing class lines—similar to working in "quality circles," or other such class-collaborationist schemes on the shop floor. But the same is true of work within any bourgeois political formation, no matter what its origins, and no matter how radical the rhetoric is that it might adopt. From a class point of view, an "independent" Rainbow, based on the Jackson movement as it exists today, would not be qualitatively different from support to Jackson inside the Democratic Party.

Jackson's fundamental similarity to more mainstream bourgeois candidates can be easily demonstrated simply by pointing out the evolution he has gone through as his candidacy gained increased legitimacy in the eyes of bourgeois public opinion. His public statements have become less and less "harsh" and "abrasive" to others in the Democratic Party and to the U.S. ruling class. He is attempting to cultivate the image of "statesman," of "responsible" party diplomat. He has moved steadily to the right, hopeful of "broadening" his base enough to actually win the nomination. Could it be any clearer that the goals of election to office and of increasing the weight and influence of Black politicians in the Democratic Party, not program or principle, are what drives Jackson's campaign?

Jackson's dedication to the *content* of traditional Democratic Party politics—whatever his differences in style—can also be seen if we look at some points from his electoral program. His "Worker's Bill of Rights" is a good example. Some worthy objectives are advanced: right to a job; right to have a democratic union; right to a living wage; safe workplaces; pension rights, education, respect, no discrimination, and more. But there is no hint as to how these objectives can be won. The only suggestion is to vote for Jesse Jackson.

Lesser-Evilism

While a large percentage of the U.S. labor and left movements has so far been trapped by their own electoral illusions into supporting Jesse Jackson, a somewhat different manifestation of the same problem will inevitably arise after the Democratic convention fails—as seems most likely—to nominate him. These forces will turn, some reluctantly and others with more enthusiasm, to whoever does become the Democratic standard-bearer, in the name of "defeating Reaganism (i.e., George Bush) at all costs."

Similar policies have been followed in previous elections. In 1960 they were defeating Nixon at all costs by electing John F. Kennedy. As president, Kennedy brought us the Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba, the October missile crisis, and the begin-

nings of U.S. involvement in Vietnam. In 1964 it was "defeat Goldwater at all costs." Sure enough, Lyndon Baines Johnson was elected, bringing the very expansion of the Vietnam war that was supposed to be avoided by Goldwater's defeat.

The proponents of this "lesser-evil" approach argue that it is necessary to work within the system to beat the reactionaries. In 1984, the *Guardian* newspaper endorsed Mondale. If we were going to get either Reagan or Mondale, they reasoned, we'd be better off with Fritz. While Nicaragua's harbors were being mined, oil supplies destroyed, and contra attacks escalating, most of the leaders of the anti-intervention movement, along with the leaders of the unions, women's liberation, civil rights, and family farmer organizations, were busy ringing doorbells—first for Jackson, then for Mondale. This led to serious problems for the movements they might have been devoting their time to instead.

Democratic Party—Graveyard of Mass Movements

No nationally coordinated actions against U.S. intervention in Central America were possible in 1984 because of the preoccupation of many movement leaders with the elections. In April 1985, big demonstrations were held in several cities. Then again, in the 1986 election year, nothing was heard from the national movement. In April 1987 massive demonstrations, involving substantial numbers of trade unionists and Blacks, took place in Washington and San Francisco. Now in 1988 the movement activists are being rounded up once again to beat the bushes for Jesse Jackson. When the crucial vote on contra aid came up in Congress last February, there were only sporadic (and relatively weak) protests around the country, instead of the massive outpouring of opposition which could have been organized with even a minimal coordinated national effort. Contra aid was defeated anyway, but the margin was much closer than it needed to be had Congress been given a tangible demonstration of the massive sentiment which exists within the population against it.

The Democratic Party has long served the ruling class by co-opting mass movements, by sidetracking them into electoral efforts instead of remaining organized and mobilized in independent activities. The Populist Party made a promising start organizing farmers and workers, Black and white, around a radical reform program until it was gobbled up by the Democrats. The Minnesota Farmer-Labor Party, based on trade unions and fighting organizations of family farmers, was the dominant party in that state until it fused with the Democrats and vanished without a trace. Trade unionists, civil rights activists, and feminists—staunch loyal supporters of the Democrats—have long been taken for granted, and condemned to steady attacks by their "friends in office," who know they can freely appeal to the right as long as they are guaranteed the votes of the left as representing the "lesser evil."

Lesser-evilism is not a new phenomenon, and it is not limited to the United States. It was around

during the time of Marx and Engels, too. Marx once explained:

That everywhere beside the bourgeois democratic candidates, worker candidates shall be put forward, to be members of the [Communist] League where possible, and their campaigns to be pushed by every means possible. Even in those places where there is no prospect at all for their election, the workers must put forward their own candidates in order to preserve their independence, count their forces, and bring before the public their revolutionary position and party standpoint. Here they must not let themselves be taken in by the phrases of the democrats—as for example that this will split the democratic party and give the reaction a chance to win. All these phrases come to nothing in the last analysis but a swindle upon the proletariat. The advances which the proletarian party will make through such independent action are infinitely more important than the disadvantage which might be caused by the presence of a few reactionaries in the Representation (from an Address of the Central Authority to the Communist League, April 1850, by Karl Marx, reprinted in an undated pamphlet *Marx & Engels on the Labor Party*, published by Forward, Toronto.)

The Labor Party Alternative

Perhaps the most pernicious effect of the "lesser-evil" phenomenon is that it delays until the distant future any steps which might be taken to begin to organize a *genuine* alternative to the two capitalist parties in the U.S. During each election most of those who desire such an alternative in the abstract decide that, since none exists, they must do the "practical" thing. The result of this pragmatic thinking is that election after election passes and no steps are taken to solve the basic dilemma. If nothing is done again in 1988 it will simply mean that, next time, the identical "practical" problem will have to be faced. At some point a decision must be made to *begin* to pose and build an alternative.

The United States is the only industrial country that does not have at least one mass party which represents, even if in a distorted way, the working class. The only genuine mass organizations of the U.S. working class are their unions. This, then, is the natural place to start in building a mass workers' party.

If the unions affected by plant closings, layoffs, and wage cuts were to enter the political arena with their own political candidates and a fighting program, they would receive tremendous support. The unions have seventeen million members, thousands of full-time officials, hundreds of newspapers and magazines. The bureaucrats now attempt to use this powerful apparatus to hustle votes for Democratic politicians—with declining success. It

is difficult to generate excitement about a Mondale or a Dukakis. Jackson has stirred many unionists and other working people because of his appeal to the real issues of concern and because he identifies himself rhetorically with the "common people," but the underlying similarity of Jackson to other capitalist politicians which we noted above is also distinctly perceptible to many.

The biggest single concern of working people today is jobs. If, instead of supporting the illusory "Massachusetts Miracle" of Dukakis, or the already discredited protectionist schemes of a Gephardt, labor was to put forward its own program for jobs (a shorter workweek with no cut in pay, a massive program of useful public works, confiscation of closed plants and those threatened with closing and their operation in the public interest under workers' control), this would arouse the enthusiasm of millions—and not just of union members. Unorganized workers, the unemployed, youth who can see no future as things stand today, residents of the ghettos and barrios, family farmers, would all be naturally attracted to a fighting labor party that took on the bosses and bankers and championed the causes of workers and the oppressed.

The Democratic Party is not the people. The only institution today with the *potential* to truly represent working people are the unions. Revolutionary Marxists will find increasing support today for the idea of a labor party.

Socialist Workers Party Election Campaigns

The Socialist Workers Party ran its first presidential campaign in 1948. Since that time, SWP election campaigns have provided a working class alternative on the ballot. They have helped popularize socialist ideas, built solidarity with mass struggles, and recruited workers and students to the SWP.

Because of the wide public interest in elections and the ability of the party to get some attention in the mass media, SWP election campaigns have been able to reach people who wouldn't normally come into contact with the party. This writer's first contact with the socialist movement was viewing an SWP presidential candidate on television.

In 1948 the SWP campaigned against the opening of the cold war and the antiunion drive. In 1952 against the Korean war. In 1956 SWP candidates defended the revolt of the Hungarian workers against Stalinist rule and opposed the Anglo-French-Israeli invasion of Egypt. In 1960 the campaign popularized and defended the Cuban revolution. In 1964 the SWP ticket supported the resurgence of Black nationalism and the big battles for civil rights.

1968 was a watershed year for the SWP. The Vietnam war, the May-June revolutionary situation in France, the ghetto rebellions following the assassination of Martin Luther King, all contributed to an explosion of radicalism on the campuses. The Young Socialist Alliance, the youth group allied with the SWP, nearly tripled in size in a year's time. The presidential ticket of Fred Halstead and

Paul Boutelle played a key role in this rapid growth. Halstead, who had participated in demonstrations by GIs at the end of World War II—demanding to be brought home and not used to intervene in China's civil war—visited GIs in Vietnam and spoke at a number of mass demonstrations against the war.

The 1972 campaign of Linda Jenness and Andrew Pulley was even bigger, getting on the ballot in many more states. In most states it is very difficult for "minor parties" to get on the ballot. The Democrats and Republicans try to keep a monopoly of the electoral process. But ballot status is very important if a campaign is to be taken seriously. The SWP learned the techniques necessary to obtain thousands of signatures on nominating petitions and mobilized the party to gain a spot on the ballot in a majority of states in the 1970s. The 1972 campaign facilitated the expansion of the SWP into a number of new cities.

The 1976 campaign of Peter Camejo and Willie Mae Reid was the party's most successful campaign in terms of new members recruited to the SWP (over 700). That campaign, beginning nearly two years before the election, was closely linked with the party's ongoing work in the women's liberation movement, community struggles for desegregation, trade union activities, and other participation in the class struggle.

In 1980 Andrew Pulley and Matilde Zimmermann were the SWP standard-bearers. They did an effective job of solidarizing with the revolutions that had occurred in Grenada, Iran, and Nicaragua in 1979 and in calling for a labor party. But the party didn't achieve nearly as much as in past campaigns. It wasn't that the campaign itself was necessarily less well organized, but rather that the overall political situation in the country had changed dramatically since the '60s and early '70s. At the same time, the perspective and activities of the SWP were also beginning to change—though this was far from obvious at the time.

The SWP had begun in the late '70s a promising start in implanting its membership in industrial unions and participating in the life of those mass organizations. In particular, good work was done around the Sadlowski campaign, in the steelworkers union, and around democratic rights in the rail unions. But the "turn to industry" began to take some tortuous "turns within the turn" to suit narrow factional objectives of the party leadership. The SWP increasingly withdrew from meaningful union work, and adopted a deep pessimism about the prospects for any fightback within the unions. By the early '80s SWP union work became reduced to simple propaganda activities, combined with participation in whatever limited action campaigns the union bureaucracy supported.

A similar turn took place in antiwar work. The SWP played a leadership role in the movement against the Vietnam war. In the early days of the Central America movement some SWP branches and activists played a similar role. But the national leadership of the party soon adopted a position

that no mass movement around Central America was possible until "the body bags start coming home"—that is, until there was direct U.S. military involvement and casualties. As in the unions, the SWP has pursued a policy of tailending the already established leaders of the peace movement. They have failed to chart an independent perspective to urge the building of a mass anti-intervention movement. A similar sectarian drift has marked the party's work in such areas as the women's liberation movement and the Black struggle.

As a result of such developments, SWP campaigns in the 1980s no longer reflected the genuine involvement of the party in the living class struggle. They have instead become devoted to increasingly abstract propaganda, with an ever-stronger focus on Cuba as a socialist society which should be looked to as a model by North American workers.

In 1983-84 the party leadership carried through a ruthless purge of all those suspected of opposing their revisionist course. Among the victims of the purge were many activists in the unions, antiwar groups, women's liberation movement, as well as experienced candidates for public office and election campaign managers.

The 1984 campaign of Mel Mason and Andrea Gonzalez was very timid and halfhearted. Unfortunately, the 1988 campaign of James Mac Warren and Kathleen Mickells appears to be even more lethargic. It was not announced until March, and campaign events have so far been minimal. In some states it is already too late to obtain ballot status.

Despite its weakness, the SWP presidential ticket deserves the support of all class conscious workers. Though it has declined substantially in both size and political understanding, the SWP remains the largest political grouping on the U.S. left which poses a revolutionary electoral alternative. A vote for the SWP is a vote against the system, for class independence.

Members and supporters of the Fourth Internationalist Tendency will build support for the SWP's 1988 campaign in our press, our unions, on campuses, and among those we work with in political activity. But our activity will have to be independent of the SWP's campaign organization itself for two reasons: 1) the party continues its factional policy of ostracism, barring F.I.T. members from campaign committees and even public meetings it organizes and 2) it would not be in the interests of the workers' movement, or even the SWP itself, for us to remain silent about the programmatic revisions and sectarianism of the SWP. Our support is real—we will vote for the SWP ticket, urge others to do the same, sign nominating petitions, etc.—but it will be critical support.

At the same time as we demonstrate our support for the SWP campaign, members of the F.I.T. will be raising—and will urge others to raise—questions of programmatic and strategic clarification that are a prerequisite to building a mass revolutionary workers' party in the United States. ■

April 1, 1988

NINE DAYS THAT SHOOK OREGON Or: How OPEU Became a Union

by Ann Montague

It is popular these days for members of Oregon Public Employees Union (OPEU—Service Employees International Union Local 503) to say that we became a union at 12:01 a.m., September 16, 1987. That was the first minute we went on strike. While "union" has been in our name since 1973, OPEU had been, admittedly, a very ineffective organization. We threatened to strike twice before, in 1975 and 1983, but backed down both times. As one staff member put it, "Basically the bargaining team discussed how long we would wait until we caved." The state always said "take it or leave it" and we always took it. But 1987 was different because we were ready.

Two years ago the union initiated an internal organizing campaign which focused on negotiating a successful contract in 1987. Its major goal was to empower the membership. From October 1985 through March 1987 we added 2,000 new members through organizing and aggressively representing those already in the bargaining unit. This increased the union from 58 to 70 percent of the work force. The second phase of our plan was to escalate militant actions in support of the union's contract demands. We wanted to pressure the state, but even more important we hoped to mobilize the membership in preparation for a strike. The campaign took on two primary aspects: organizing around pay equity for job classifications which were lower paid because the majority of workers employed in them were women, and job site actions.

Pay Equity Organizing

OPEU is the only union in Oregon that has set pay equity as a priority issue. It is something we have been paying attention to for six years. The union hired an economist and research director who in 1983 headed the Comparable Worth Task Force which was established by Oregon State Senate Bill 484—with the aim of revamping the antiquated state classification system to "attempt to achieve equity."

As a union we invested a lot of time and resources in trying to shape the state's new, classification system, believing that this would be the vehicle through which we could achieve the goal of pay equity for women. As years went by, however, it became clear that we were being co-opted by management, and that we would have to reevaluate our involvement in *their* process. In 1985, when Governor Atiyeh vetoed the first pay equity bill,

we decided that we should leave the classification system to the state. We informed the administration that OPEU would demand pay equity upgrades on the basis of the old classification system if their new system was not ready by the time our next negotiations began. There was no reason for us to delay pay equity bargaining just because they couldn't get their new system together.

Now we began to organize in earnest. We had to start by showing OPEU's commitment to seeing pay equity become a reality after all these years. We had spent a lot of energy on the classification system which kept falling through, and we had worked to get pay equity legislation passed and money appropriated just to see the governor veto it. The workers in the pay equity classifications had to see that we were determined to force the implementation of this demand, and that it was possible to do so despite the failures of past efforts.

Our first rank-and-file activity was to organize a series of pay equity hearings. We chose the higher education agencies because they have the largest number of clerical and food-service workers—classifications which are the lowest paid and most undervalued by the state. The hearings started at Oregon State University where they were so successful that we held others, at the University of Oregon and at Portland State University.

The hearings consisted of testimony by workers, most of whom had never spoken in public before, about the value of the work that they did and about their own poverty. We broke the taboo which says that workers are not supposed to talk about how much money we make. That part alone had a very liberating effect on the proceedings. The hearings were profoundly emotional both for those giving the testimony and for the audience—which was composed mostly of state workers and some faculty and community members. State legislators from the appropriate districts were invited to attend, but it was made clear that they were there to listen. This was a night for the workers to talk.

One example of the kind of testimony which came out at the hearings was from a clerical assistant who had written out what she wanted to say, but decided that she could not stand up and read it. We had someone else read it for her. The starting salary for her job classification was \$862 per month. As a single mother receiving such a pitiful wage she qualified for food stamps, housing subsidy, and the school lunch program. On top of that, she was depending on a community food basket to be able to have Thanksgiving dinner for her family.

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All of this while she was working full time for the state of Oregon.

The initial purpose of the hearings was to educate our union and the public about the need for pay equity, and to get media coverage to show that OPEU was gearing up for the next stage of the fight. We succeeded in these goals. The president of Oregon State University who attended the initial hearing began to slump in his chair after the first couple of witnesses testified. As he was leaving, the local paper asked for his comments. All he could say was "It's a travesty," words which appeared on the paper's front page the next morning.

But as important as such publicity was, the most significant result of these events was the transformation of the women who testified. They became a core of pay equity activists, who eventually played important roles in the leadership of our strike.

Involving the Broader Women's Movement

In the summer of 1986 we started organizing a Pay Equity Action Coalition. We wanted to involve women's organizations and other unions in this coalition to pressure the state. Our main activity was a Pay Equity Day rally in Salem, in front of the state capitol.

The coalition got off to a slow start because of the elections coming up in November. The Oregon Women's Political Caucus was supporting Republican Norma Paulus for governor, which put it in conflict with the AFL-CIO unions' official position favoring Democrat Neil Goldschmidt. Once the elections were over, however, there was a lot of excitement about the rally which by this time was about two months away.

The National Organization for Women did not involve itself actively as an organization, but many of its activists helped to build the event. The Oregon Women's Political Caucus declined to be part of the coalition, but since it merely represents elected officials and is not a membership organization it wasn't missed much. The Women's Rights Coalition, a lobbying group, participated in the coalition and decided to organize a lobbying day the day before the rally. But the most important job remained in the hands of the OPEU—turning out the numbers.

It was not difficult to motivate the union as a whole to take on the rally as a major priority. We were gearing up for bargaining and it was generally accepted that 1987 was the year that, as a union, we had to go to bat for low wage workers. We enlisted support from the trades and other male-dominated classifications to help with the physical aspects of the rally, including security. Meanwhile we worked to fill the buses and get women to Salem.

It was pouring rain, but 800 people showed up, with busloads coming from the eastern and southern parts of the state. Everyone agreed that it was a great victory and the largest demonstration that OPEU had ever organized. A counterdemonstration called by three groups—the Eagle Forum, Dad's

Against Discrimination, and the Oregon Fair Labor Standards Committee—drew 35 people, who carried signs reading "Kill Pay Equity" and "Dyke Worth."

As a result of this rally and the pay equity hearings the issue was becoming known in communities and workplaces across the state. And everyone knew that the leadership for the movement for pay equity was the OPEU. Members developed a new pride in "our" union, which at times was referred to as the Oregon Pay Equity Union. As we approached the time for contract bargaining we had to disregard old attitudes about what bargaining should be and replace them with new ones. That was part of our job on the Pay Equity Bargaining Team. We started repeating the maxim that would predominate as we went into the formal sessions: contracts are not negotiated at the bargaining table, but by activity at the worksite.

We had to make sure that the workers in the pay equity classifications remained active throughout the period of contract negotiations. At one point, when discussions at the bargaining table were becoming very impersonal, we decided to make it all a little more tangible for the management team by having people at their worksites xerox their pay stubs and write personal notes on them. We then presented these notes at one bargaining session. At another time, after management tried to stall the negotiations by calling a number of long caucus meetings, we called one of our own and adjourned to the front of the Executive Department where there was a candlelight rally and songfest in progress.

Other pressure was applied. With management clearly trying to hold pay equity "hostage," workers chose a symbolic protest—sealing the doors of the Executive Department one morning with yellow tape, and tying yellow ribbons around nearby trees. Late one night a few workers went to the home of Karen Roach, head of Personnel and Labor Relations, tied yellow ribbons on her trees, taped the entrance to her driveway, and placed some Burma shave-type signs which she would have to read on her way to work the next morning.

We had come a long way from the time when members of the OPEU thought that once a governor vetoed a pay equity bill that was where things ended. Organizing around this issue had become an important component of the union's increasing militancy. There could be no question that for these workers, pay equity was an issue over which they were willing to go on strike.

Job Site Actions

Job site activity started in June and grew in intensity as the contract expired. These spontaneous demonstrations and actions in the workplace escalated the involvement of workers in the bargaining process, and once again reiterated the theme that the real bargaining was taking place where we worked every day. Workers picketed in front of their office buildings, sent delegations unannounced to supervisors' offices, and demon-

strated around specific worksite issues. As it became clearer that a strike was unavoidable, the activities became more militant.

One action was a lunch hour "death of dignity" demonstration where hundreds of state workers, dressed in black, followed a casket being carried into the State Executive Department building. It remained there after 1:00 p.m. draped with flowers and black armbands for all the managers to see as they returned from lunch.

In some state offices where workers routinely worked through their morning and afternoon breaks, a new tradition was established—"unity breaks" where everyone walked out together in a festive atmosphere, with music and plenty of OPEU balloons. A branch manager of Adult and Family Services tried to ban the balloons, saying they were "conducting union business in the workplace." The next day more balloons showed up, printed with "OPEU conducting union business." The more management reacted, the more outraged and outrageous the workers became.

Some of the most effective actions took place around the workload issues of Children's Services Division and Adult and Family Services. Offices conducted "work-ins." Union members refused to leave their offices at 5:00 and continued to work late into the night. If managers were at home watching the 11:00 news they saw their workers on T.V. telling their individual stories of problems connected to work overload.

The militancy of the activities varied from agency to agency. Whether the worksite was simply organized to have everyone wear stickers that said "Equity and Justice in '87," or participated in the work-ins, the result was the same. There emerged a new visibility and empowerment of the rank and file, who now understood that they were the most important part of the bargaining process.

The union began to publish a weekly *Negotiation News* to keep the entire membership informed about what was happening. When that organ turned into a daily *Strike Alert* we knew that we were ready.

Issues and Strategy in the Strike

OPEU represents 16,500 state employees in 45 state agencies, who work in 550 different job classifications. The workers we represent run six state colleges and universities, the departments of justice and revenue, the department of human services, Oregon Public Broadcasting, the departments of agriculture, forestry, state parks, Oregon Department of Transportation, and the Bureau of Labor and Industries—to name a few. The major issues emerged as: pay, insurance, pay equity, seniority rights, and work overload. For some agencies work overload and seniority were seen as more important than the pay issues, while in other classifications pay, insurance, and pay equity were higher priorities. The proposed takebacks in insurance combined with a 2 percent pay raise offered by the state would have meant a net gain for some clerical workers of a mere 21 cents per month. When the strike vote was taken in August, it was 95 percent in favor of a walkout.

When the strike was over it was easy to look back and say that our approach, which we referred to as the "strategic strike," was a stroke of collective genius. But explaining and executing this approach during the course of events was a little more difficult. Many workers favored a more comprehensive action, a general strike carried out simultaneously against all state agencies. This appeared to be easier to prepare for and to administer. But it would also have been just as easy for management to plan for and respond to, and the state administration was clearly preparing for such an event.

We tried to do something different, and called our approach "striking smarter." It was explained well by the elected leadership through the *OPEU Activist* which went out to union members across the state after the strike vote:

OPEU's strike plan will involve every member of the bargaining unit. But, that involvement will come at different times and for limited periods of time. To strike strategically and smarter, we must identify the areas of management's greatest vulnerability. Then, like skilled surgeons, we must dissect the target. Secondly, we must never underestimate the opponent. The state is strong, but we can undercut its strength by acting unpredictably. We must "out think" management by disrupting where they least expect disruption. A strategic strike has no end point. After day one, every manager in the state Executive Department must say and think that this activity can go on forever. Unlike a general strike, with total disruption but uncertain duration, a smart strike will force settlement because it causes serious disruption and the end is out of sight. The key is duration. We can adopt the strategy of European armies standing as clear targets in red coats, on the battlefield, willing to sacrifice thousands of lives for victory. Or, we can be revolutionary Minutemen, willing to respond to the clarion call of our own Paul Reveres on a minute's notice to strike without warning, disappearing into the mist before the injunction is filed, leaving confused and dazed supervisors attempting to assess the damage and jumpy at the prospect of the next work stoppage.

No doubt this exact approach will not work for every union or in all situations. But for us, given our specific opponent and tasks, it worked exceptionally well. Many of the specific things that we did, as well as our basic approach—the creative application of the strike tactic based on a mobilized and informed rank and file—can certainly be applied profitably by other workers in struggle. It must be remembered at all times that the key to our success was not *primarily* the specific way we chose to conduct the strike, but the worksite activity

before the event, which helped the union's rank and file to gain a sense of their own power. It is this which gave us the strength to carry out an effective strike strategy, the strength to continue on until we won.

If there was any problem with our strategy it was getting workers to return to work after three days on strike, which was the average "roll." Part of the power of this kind of strike is in its discipline. The union is in control because the state did not know who would go out or when.

In fact, only a very few people knew until the night before. This meant that hundreds of workers had to be called to be told that they should show up for picketing the next morning. This was a huge organizational task, but it did not cause any significant problems because every night workers were waiting by their phones to hear if they would be on strike the next day. And it was necessary to maintain tight security in order to keep management off guard, as well as to show that we could take workers off the job and bring them back at will.

Some of the greatest chaos was created by the state itself. We did not schedule Adult and Family Services and the Children's Services Division to strike until the third "roll." Because those workers were some of the most militant, the state decided to close many offices and consolidate services on the first day of the strike, expecting the vast majority of the workers to be out. For example, the offices in Corvallis, Lebanon, and Sweet Home were closed, and managers and non-striking workers were supposed to report to the Albany office. Of course, everyone showed up for work in Albany, and there was mass confusion.

For those workers who did not feel right about working while others were on strike, or who didn't want to go back once they were out, we had an answer: Join the "Flying Squadron."

The Flying Squadron

As effective as our overall strategy was, it was the element of the Flying Squadron that brought heart and soul to the strike. The Flying Squadron was made up of workers, predominantly women workers, who were committed to the strike from the first day. We traveled the state, building the strike and keeping morale high. Out of the Flying Squadron came women and men who are now our best activists and the new leaders of OPEU.

As members of the Flying Squadron met their sisters and brothers in other agencies and traveled the state, their view of their union changed. One bargaining team member described it this way: "The experience took people out of themselves and gave them a view of the world outside their own agencies. They saw a union movement and it expanded their view of the world." The issues for one agency became the issues for all agencies.

There was no question but that the high point for the Flying Squadron was when we emptied the huge state office building in downtown Portland. We needed an action on Friday to build momentum going

into the weekend, so about thirty Flying Squadron members with whistles around their necks entered the elevator in the building. We got off at each floor in groups, blew our whistles, and announced that the building was now on strike. It was 10:00 in the morning. As hundreds of workers walked and ran out of the building to join the picketers on the outside we knew the strike was strong and ready to go into the second roll.

It should also be mentioned that PERU, the union that represents OPEU staff members, voted to donate all their pay to our strike fund as long as the strike lasted, and most of them became members of the Flying Squadron.

Whether the Flying Squadron was emptying office buildings or bolstering morale on the picket lines around the state, it added a unique dimension to the strike.

The Democratic Governor

One of the strongest lessons learned by many OPEU members, who had worked to elect Governor Neil Goldschmidt, was one of betrayal. It was a very painful, but for that same reason a very powerful lesson. The sentiment of these workers was reflected in a poster produced by the Flying Squadron. It showed a pair of old sneakers with the words, "Neil: We Walked for You; You Walked on Us; We're Walking Out!"

The governor showed up at the two main AFL-CIO Labor Day picnics nine days before the strike deadline and was greeted by hundreds of angry OPEU members. In front of the labor gathering he joked about OPEU "scrapping for its workers." He said he was sure that there would be a settlement before the strike deadline. At the same time he was already planning to threaten state workers by declaring our strike illegal. On a technicality, a day before the strike, he claimed our strike would not be legal because, even though we had given the required ten-day strike notice, we hadn't given the required notice to end the contract extension. The governor's plan backfired, however. The more management threatened, the madder people got. Instead of being intimidated they got angry. We put out a leaflet in the workplace which said, "State Fails in Last Minute Maneuver. . . . Consider the Source. Join the Strike for Justice and Equity." And the workers did.

In the middle of the strike, the AFL-CIO state convention took place. We had been working to get the convention to rescind its invitation to Goldschmidt to be the featured speaker, but the bureaucrats wouldn't budge. Meanwhile, we had buses chartered to take 300 Flying Squadron members to Seaside, Oregon, to shut down the convention when Goldschmidt started to speak. There were a lot of disappointed Flying Squadron members when Goldschmidt decided not to attend and allowed the AFL-CIO leadership to save face. The governor explained to the press that he canceled his speech because he didn't want to cause problems for his "friends in the AFL-CIO."

(Continued on page 36)

REVOLUTIONARY PERSPECTIVES IN THE U.S. TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

by Dave Riehle

On January 15, 1988, the George A. Hormel Co. closed down its cut and kill operation at its Austin, Minnesota, plant, eliminating over 300 jobs. The department will reopen, however, but as a sub-contracted operation run by the Excell Corp. with nonunion employees at about half the prevailing wage in the unionized sector of the plant. So even the scabs are scabbed on now.

The entire Ottumwa, Iowa, Hormel plant was shut down in August of last year, and reopened as an Excell operation, nonunion, at about \$5.50 an hour.

Excell is the second largest beef processor in the country, after IBP, and is itself a subsidiary of Cargill. Excell, like IBP, is now getting into pork production in a big way, and fundamentally changing the industry, as IBP did when it entered beef over 20 years ago.

On February 2, the local union in Austin, renamed Local 9, announced that the Hormel Co. had agreed to grant indefinite recall rights to the P-9 strikers. Their seniority would have otherwise expired on September 2, 1988.

However, since the company says it is trying to place the 300 displaced cut and kill workers in the rest of the plant before they bring back any of the strikers, it does not seem that any P-9er is going back to work in the foreseeable future.

The packinghouse strikes at Cudahy in Milwaukee, at John Morrell in Sioux Falls, S.D. and Sioux City, Ia., what we might call the Lewie Anderson strikes, which were supposed to redeem the reputation of the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) after the betrayal of the P-9 strike, have been disasters.

The outcome of the strike at IBP, the fifth in 20 years, wasn't quite as bad as it could have been, because the IBP officials were caught lying to a congressional committee investigating on-the-job injuries, and had to beat a sort of retreat, settling the strike perhaps sooner than they had planned. Nevertheless, the result was that after a seven-month strike the workers were stuck with a three-year wage freeze, essentially what the company's offer had been at the beginning, and a two-tier wage agreement was instituted—after all of Lewie Anderson's brave words about "No More Concessions." And this is the plant his mother and sister work at.

This is an edited text of the trade union report approved by the February 1988 F.I.T. National Conference in Cleveland, Ohio. The political resolution from the conference, "The Threefold Crisis Facing U.S. Working People," appeared in Bulletin IDOM No. 51.

The Cudahy strike, which started in December 1986, is still going on, although the company filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy proceedings in December 1987, and is making noises about closing the plant.

The sympathy strike at the Sioux Falls plant was called off on November 5, with 2,000 scabs still in the plant. The strategy there is supposed to bring Morrell to its knees by threatening them with the eventual prospect of having to pay back wages to the strikers, if the NLRB is obliging enough to declare it an unfair labor practices strike. This is what you call innovative bargaining strategy—threatening to bring the bosses to their knees by calling off the strike.

The Sioux City strike is still officially on, nearly a year later, with no end in sight, except possibly decertification.

Perspectives of the SWP

We might keep in mind that these were the strikes that the Socialist Workers Party was proclaiming a year ago represented a giant step forward from the Austin strike, which they unceremoniously dropped from their list of worthy causes.

Their illusion, shared by others, was that these were the real thing, because they were endorsed by the international union.

In meetings around the Rank and File Packinghouse Workers Conference last year, SWP members repeatedly said that these strikes were the wave of the future, and in fact it was *only* in meatpacking and coal mining that there was *any* fightback at all.

The Austin workers were supposed to drop their struggle and especially their boycott, and go out on the road to give the benefit of their experience to the fellow packinghouse workers on the picket lines, by "mixing it up," to use the obligatory phrase repeated in cadence by the SWPers.

The real line was characteristically expressed most directly, not in the crooked doubletalk published in lengthy political reports in the *Militant*, but in an article in the August 28 issue by a rank-and-file party member, who said, after reporting on his experience in taking notes on a struggle for union democracy unfolding around him in Local 100A of the UFCW in Chicago: "The experience also shows that the union won't be changed by challenging the officials head on. No matter how basic a demand may appear, the officials can easily turn a head-on assault around, making it seem like you are attacking the union." This "head-on assault" was a fight for more stewards, democratically elected, spearheaded by the "Kinfolk," an indigenous, pre-

dominantly Black female rank-and-file organization based at the Oscar Mayer plant.

The axis of SWP activity in the unions now seems to be endlessly repeating the latest phrase, seemingly invested with some profound significance, put into circulation by the party leadership.

The current one favored seems to be "rout," as in, "the state of the unions today is a 'rout, not a defeat in battle.'"

"The unions turned in on themselves and voted for big cutbacks for their members," the January 1 *Militant* quotes Jack Barnes as saying. "It was a rout, not a defeat that comes from being defeated in battle."

It is hard to interpret the "rout" theory in any other way than that the members let down the officials. After all, in most cases it is the members who do the voting. A "rout" is a mass panic, a breaking of ranks.

What actually happened in these meatpacking strikes? They weren't routs, but they are defeats. It is hardly a rout, where they hold out for a year. They were defeats, as a result of the *union bureaucracy's* default in failing to mobilize the rank and file for a serious fight to close the plants and keep the scabs out. In fact when the rank and file spontaneously took such direct action, the union leadership intervened to demobilize them, demanding compliance with antipicketing injunctions. They are incapable of doing anything else, because to do otherwise would mean a serious confrontation with the government. Furthermore, they have no perspective of doing much but going along with almost everything the corporations propose, as long as they can retain the bosses as their dues-collecting agencies. As Farrell Dobbs said, "in collective bargaining the bureaucrats are concerned with, not how much the workers need, but how little they can be forced to accept. The bureaucrats' goals," he said, "are shaped by what the corporation will give without a struggle."

No Substitute for Class Struggle

We are seeing the full logic of this being played out in the debacle of the four meatpacking strikes of 1987. Lewie Anderson tried to concoct an imitation of the Austin struggle, with boycotts, rallies, and so forth, but they never ignited anything. You couldn't ask for a fuller demonstration of the fact that effective union strategy is not fundamentally a matter of technique, but of class struggle and rank-and-file democracy.

The various union progressives who are dabbling with so-called "in-plant strategies" as an alternative to strikes, and really as an alternative to all-out struggle, are another confirmation of the sterility of any approach that tries to substitute *techniques* for mobilizing the rank and file for a showdown fight.

In each of these packinghouse strikes, the companies replaced strikers with scabs and carried on production. After spontaneous mobilizations to confront the scabs at the plant gates, cops were

called out, injunctions issued, compliance assured by the union officials, and everything settled down to a few token pickets, a few token rallies, and a long protracted standoff.

In their essence, unfortunately, the International Paper strikes do not diverge from this. The strikes continue in Maine, Alabama, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin. They involve big mobilizations of the membership away from the picket line, community meetings, rallies, and so on. Ray Rogers has been hired to organize a Corporate Campaign on their behalf by the United Paperworkers International Union.

In spite of the undoubtedly positive features of all of this, the leadership announced that they have called off the pickets at the Lock Haven, Pa., plant, to avoid confiscatory fines threatened to be levied on the union.

It is certainly helpful to strikers to have the aid of someone as sincerely devoted to the interests of the workers as Ray Rogers energetically helping to organize caravans of rank and filers to other cities, plants, and unions. But the Corporate Campaign strategy of directing protest against the companies with which the directors of International Paper are affiliated results, in my opinion, in confusing the issue rather than clarifying it. It creates a multiplicity of targets, rather than focusing everything on International Paper.

Almost everything that came down on the heads of the P-9 strikers was beyond their ability to reverse, but the one authentic weakness that constituted a real handicap, I think, was the inability of the leadership to reduce the struggle to a few simple, clearcut, and burning issues readily grasped by all their supporters. The rank-and-file workers who rallied to their defense tried to do this instinctively by taking sides in a class sense, but the ability of their supporters to defend the struggle to others who were confused by the barrage of hostile propaganda was made more difficult by not having any clear direction from the main spokespeople of the union.

The Corporate Campaign strategy did not help here, on the ideological or programmatic level. Too many targets create too many subsidiary debates and questions. It was undeniable that First Bank in many ways acts as an executive committee of big capital in the Upper Midwest, but trying to convert this essentially pedagogical point into an agitational issue in the strike was an error.

The recent UAW Ford and GM agreements have ratified further capitulation to the auto companies, and the continued implantation of a plant floor structure which seems indistinguishable from that of a company union. The auto bosses now have the right to fire workers for absenteeism, *with no right of appeal through the grievance procedure*. *Business Week* reports on the Ford agreement under the heading "Smiling Fender to Fender."

Teamsters Trusteeship Threat

The Teamsters Union faces the possibility of government trusteeship, an action which has engen-

dered a variety of responses from the "progressives." An interesting exchange on this subject is carried in the February issue of *Labor Notes*, with the United Electrical Workers secretary treasurer Amy Newell opposing government takeover of any union under any conditions in opposition to the ambiguous position of Suzanne Gordon, an activist labor lawyer who has aligned herself with struggles for union democracy.

Newell says: "The most right wing anti-union administration in 50 years thinks it has figured out a way to take over the largest union in the United States. Why," she asks, "would anyone think this would result in greater democracy, more progressive policies or more militant unionism for the Teamsters?"

This is a good question. The fact that it even has to be posed, in a publication that acts as a de facto organ for the left-liberal progressive milieu in the trade union movement, demonstrates the ambivalence of these elements' commitment to or understanding of elementary principles of trade union democracy and class independence.

Although Newell's position is far from simple itself, it is significant that it is she, a full participant in the labor movement, rather than one of its progressive satellites, who expresses the only supportable position—that is, "Hands Off the Teamsters Union."

This question, of course, arose 30 years ago in a strikingly similar form with the attack on the Teamsters by the McClellan committee in the U.S. Senate. Dave Beck, then head of the Teamsters, was hardly a more appetizing specimen of union leader than the government fink Jackie Presser—favored son of this very city, and himself the son of former Teamster potentate Big Bill Presser, described by Jack Maloney, who knew him at the beginning of his labor career, as a "footpad" and collector of graft.

This earlier attack on the Teamsters was analyzed at the time by Farrell Dobbs as one whose "real aim is to raise false hopes that the rank and file can rely upon the government to uphold their rights. It is a trick designed to get workers to accept government intervention in internal union affairs.

"Willing though the bureaucrats are to serve the capitalist government," he said, "the ruling class is losing confidence that, acting on their own, they can continue to restrain the union rank and file. That is why the capitalist politicians are preparing new repressive laws which can be expected to impose increasingly harsh governmental regulation of union activity and internal affairs. Hence the talk," he continues, "of giving the bureaucrats quasi-governmental powers to police the workers."

Superficially it might seem that taking this as an analogy with the late 1980s might be erroneous. After all, a rank and file which has been "routed"—as some commentators on the labor movement allege—would hardly seem to require "restraint."

In this light, it is instructive to recall the systematic usurpation of the democratic rights of the workers by Federal District Judge Edward Devitt and the "quasi-governmental powers" awarded the UFCW trustees in Austin, Minnesota, to "police the workers." The fact that it was a judicial improvisation in this case was only because, up to this point, there has not been another P-9.

Farsighted Ruling Class

The real error, however, would lie in supposing that the ruling class is as impressionistic and shortsighted as some of the champions of the working class.

The bosses are capable of thinking ahead a few years, and are well aware that the continued assault on the workers must at some point bring forth a sustained response and resistance.

The financial magazine, *Barron's*, wrote in editorial commentary last June that "Unionism in This Country Is Once More on the March."

It points to corporate campaigns as one example of a revived willingness of unions to engage in what it calls "less collective bargaining than campaigns of vilification, harassment and an ugly assortment of dirty tricks."

"In spite of union concessions, two-tier wages agreements, etc., the climate is changing and not for the better," *Barron's* says. It quotes Robert Parry, president of the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco, who warns: "Growth in excess of what I expect this year and next could move the economy dangerously close to capacity restraints, at least in terms of labor."

Is this farfetched? The president of Excell Corporation recently gave a speech to the Des Moines Chamber of Commerce in which he offered the opinion that perhaps the drive against wages in the meatpacking industry had been too successful. Now that wages in the industry are down around the \$4-5 an hour level, he said, it is becoming difficult in some areas to recruit and retain an adequate labor force. The industry is now building big new plants in rural areas, away from unions and close to the hog and cattle producers. These areas are already partially depopulated due to the crisis in the agricultural economy, especially by young people. Now that meatpacking wages have been driven down to what they like to call "competitive levels" why should someone want to risk health and safety working under brutal conditions in a packing plant when it is possible to work for the same money at McDonalds or WalMart?

Perhaps, says Excell's president, we ought to kick the wages back up to around \$6 or \$7 an hour.

When I read this I was struck by how offhandedly he threw this out—just like it was small change. This is after years of hearing corporations motivate wage cuts of a dollar an hour by insisting that they can't stay in business without them. And then this guy comes along and says, well what the hell, what's a few more bucks an hour. And they said the whole fight down in Austin was over a dollar an hour!

When the mass production meatpacking industry was created in the late 19th and early 20th century they solved the problem of labor shortages by importing entire communities of immigrants—especially Eastern Europeans and African Americans. Now they are importing large groups of Southeast Asians wholesale into rural areas like Columbus Junction, Iowa, where IBP has established a huge hog processing operation.

The opening of the IBP plant in Columbus Junction has almost doubled the population and IBP is trying to get the local zoning laws changed so they can house the workers in mobile homes. An IBP lawyer was quoted as saying that the influx of workers has shown that there is a tremendous need for cheap housing. "We have to be realistic in the future," he says. "Mobile homes are an adequate type of housing for *these people*, and for many, the only thing they can afford" (emphasis added).

In the first volume of *Capital* Marx quotes an 18th century economist who says: "It would be easier, where property is well secured, to live without money than without the poor, for who would do the work? It is in the interest of all rich nations that the greatest part of the poor should almost never be idle, and yet continually spend what they get. Those that get their living by daily labor have nothing to stir them up to be serviceable but their wants, which it is prudence to *relieve*, but folly to *cure*. The only thing then that can render the laboring man industrious is a moderate quantity of money, for too little will make him desperate and too much will make him insolent and lazy."

No Return of Givebacks

This is the state of things in the post P-9 period. The UFCW bureaucracy didn't reform itself after Austin and none of the others will either. There has been no rise in the standard of living of the working class since 1977. Unemployment, permanent loss of jobs, especially in basic industry, has not abated significantly since the 1981-82 recession. The restructuring of American industry has led to a steady, and impressive, rise in productivity by capitalist economic standards, and big profits for big capital in basic industry, in spite of the "woes" reported by the capitalist press—for example, in rail and auto.

This has not, however, softened the bosses' hearts. On the contrary, GM, reporting record profits for last year, announces that it is not enough.

The expectation projected by the union bureaucracy that new profits would give rise to a giveback of the givebacks has not materialized. For example, Lewie Anderson has said: "The future of the U.S. meatpacking industry looks very bright. The prospect of even greater profitability for those who stay is just about assured. In order to advance and get a fair share of the prosperity, the UFCW and its packinghouse members must be a part of that industry in the future. No one," he says, "deserves to share more in this upward cycle than our membership."

This isn't going to happen, because that isn't the *policy* of the employers. Because it isn't *their policy*, it is going to be opposed by the courts, the labor boards, the media, the politicians, the judges, and so on.

And because it isn't their policy, those who are dependent, psychologically and politically, on these second and thirdhand expressions of ruling class policy—the reformists, the union bureaucrats, and those on the left who look, involuntarily or not, to the union bureaucrats for a validation of what is possible—all those layers will continue to be demoralized, pessimistic, and passive.

A Way Out of the Morass

But a review of all the foregoing events and circumstances also demonstrates that this situation also has its negation. It is quite clear to anyone who wants to see it that the workers are willing to fight, to sacrifice, and to stand together.

They are deeply disturbed by the deterioration of their wages, working conditions, their organizations and their futures. This is producing a continually deepening differentiation between the bureaucracy and the working members, through a molecular process that produces advance warnings and symptoms, but that as yet is still accumulating material for an explosion.

There is clear evidence of this in the erosion of the moral and political authority of the union bureaucrats, and their lessening ability to police the ranks. The widening gap between the demoralization and cynicism of the bureaucrats, and those who look to them, voluntarily or involuntarily, and the mood of the workers in the unions is observable on a daily basis.

The very success of the bosses' antilabor offensive is stacking up dynamite for the future. We can see, in the meatpacking industry in particular, the creation of a young, dispossessed, miserably underpaid proletariat. It reminds me of descriptions of the "auto slaves" in the late twenties and early thirties, those who drove the CIO to victory against the giant automobile corporations. It is just a matter of time until a similar process produces similar results in other industries.

The more farsighted elements of the ruling class see it and are preparing for it, and preparation is our responsibility also.

What should our contribution to this process be? The workers are prepared to defend themselves, and have done so, energetically, but only episodically. This evident willingness to struggle has not generalized itself into sustained activity—none of the big picket line mobilizations of the eighties have been able to overcome the dead hand of the bureaucracy, which has successfully thwarted spontaneous attempts at mass struggle.

The need then is for a struggle to separate it from the disorganizing influence of the union bureaucracy—in a word to become independent.

As Comrade Dobbs said in his discussion of the earlier attack on the Teamsters: "Bureaucratic rule

over the unions must be broken—and rank-and-file control established—without yielding an inch to the capitalist government. Defense of workers' democracy must also include a fight for unconditional independence of the unions from government control."

He laid out a suggested series of transitional demands as a possible axis for this fight, which is worth reprinting, although I won't take the time to go through it here. In general this is a question which still remains latent in most cases, but it can rise to the surface rapidly as a struggle takes on sharper form. I would refer comrades to the "Packinghouse Workers Bill of Rights" adopted at the Rank and File Conference in Austin last May for additional material. (See *Bulletin IDOM* No. 43.)

Independence demands democracy—workers' democracy, which means, concretely, *the right to decide*.

In order for this challenge to be effective it must find expression on a systematic and sustained basis—that means it must have *consciousness*. Consciousness, and consciousness of what happened before, *historic* consciousness, can only be expressed in a *program*, and a *program* can only find expression through *organization*, and action.

Our contribution to this process at this point must of necessity be primarily in the form of discussion and analysis. Neither we, nor any other component of the left, are in any position to direct events, or even to influence them in a decisive way, although opportunities to make a contribution can and do arise if we conduct ourselves in the correct way. Indeed, our commentary and analysis will only have a scholastic and schematic character if we fail to participate in the unions, and to participate as people who have no special angle other than the interests of the workers. Jim Cannon said: "Any small organization of revolutionists condemned to isolation by circumstances beyond their control, regardless of their original wishes or intentions, can fail on one account. The moment it ceases to think of itself as a part of the working class, which can only realize its aims *with* and *through* the working class, and to conduct itself accordingly, it is done for."

If we don't succumb to that, we will find a way to *address and explain* the real, living, day-to-day developments in the working class. If we do that, and we must do it primarily through our own press, modest as it is, we will be heard. Without lightmindedly dismissing the real handicap of our size, we must be confident that the ideas and program that we defend, the tremendous living expe-

rience of the revolutionary American working class, will find a way to the workers of this generation. Our experience over the last four years, limited as it is, shows this as a certainty.

Let me close by quoting some brief remarks by Jim Cannon that summarize in the wonderfully clear, simple, and direct way that he possessed, and that we should try to learn, how revolutionary socialist American workers should orient themselves:

Trade union work requires patience, endurance, and skill. In very few unions at the present is it possible to unfold the whole program of the Fourth International. In many unions dominated by red-baiting bureaucrats, it is necessary for revolutionary militants to refrain from exposing themselves to expulsion by advertising their political affiliations.

Revolutionary trade union work, as a rule, in America, is quiet, molelike and unspectacular. To carry on such work unflinchingly; to work in the unions in piecemeal fashion for parts of the program while holding fast to the party, which in its general agitation expounds and defends the program as a whole; to be attentive to the smallest union issues of the day without succumbing to opportunism; to entrench oneself and be in a position to influence the whole union when the time for action comes—these are among the sternest and most important revolutionary tests today.

Such tasks require patience, persistence and prudence. It is easy to shirk them, or to fail miserably in their performance. We know such cases, and the super-radicalism of the delinquents is poor consolation to the party which needs influence and support in the unions more than it needs anything else. It is easy to fight one's way out of a union by ill-considered tactics and still easier to talk one's way out. But what the party needs is militants who know how to dig deep into the unions and stay there, gather a circle of sympathizers and supporters about them and transmute their personal influence into party support in the trade union movement. ("The Relationship Between Mass Agitation and Trade Union Work," *Socialist Appeal*, June 30, 1939.) ■

A PERVERSION OF INTERNATIONALISM

Founding Conference of the Communist League of Britain

by Tom Barrett

The March 4, 1988, issue of the *Militant* newspaper features, in its monthly *International Socialist Review* supplement, a report by Doug Jenness on the founding conference of the Communist League of Britain (CLB). Those readers who are unfamiliar with British revolutionary socialist politics will have no idea what the Communist League is, or even that the conference on which Jenness reports was the organization's first. But this is a minor objection.

A far bigger problem is that Jenness's report might well cause political confusion and disorientation by inexperienced activists in the U.S. and Britain. The international political tendency represented by the Communist League and by the U.S. Socialist Workers Party (SWP), which publishes the *Militant* and from which the CLB takes its political inspiration, has done a great deal of damage in the workers' movement, especially in those two countries. It is incumbent upon revolutionary socialists to explain to all militant workers and young people what took place at the CLB conference, the erroneous analysis that was presented there, and that this has nothing in common with either Marxism or proletarian internationalism.

The Birth of the Communist League

The January 30, 1988, Communist League conference represented the consummation of a split from the Socialist League (SL), the British section of the Fourth International. However, this split is only the postscript to a wrecking operation which has been going on for over seven years. A group called "The Faction," led by Brian Grogan and politically allied with the U.S. Socialist Workers Party leadership, has played the principal role in this ugly situation. It is this group which has now formed the CLB. Its policy of dead-end factionalism completely paralyzed the SL before its members left—leading to more than one split and a steady stream of party activists leaving the organization.

The immediate pretext for The Faction's split from the SL is unclear at this writing, and—whatever it happens to be—it is unimportant. As the pioneer American Trotskyist Jim Cannon said, there are two reasons for doing anything: a good reason and a real reason. Whatever the "good reason" might be, the "real reason" The Faction split from the Socialist League is that the Socialist Workers Party leadership and its international co-thinkers have become opponents of Trotskyism. In Britain The Faction concluded that it had finally grown to the extent possible, and damaged the SL as much as it could, so that remaining inside the organization served no further purpose.

It is significant that of the three major political reports approved by the CLB conference, two were given by North Americans. Mary-Alice Waters explained her views on the role of Cuba and Fidel Castro in the world revolution today, and SWP national secretary Jack Barnes presented an explanation of the world economic crisis. It is not a sign of organizational strength for the CLB that no one within its own ranks was able to give either of these reports. But even more critical than this organizational problem was the programmatic and theoretical weakness demonstrated by the reports' political content.

Cuba and Castroism

Waters focused on the Cuban "rectification," a process of, in her words, "correcting mistaken policies that have tended to demobilize people's creative energies and obstruct collective action to solve problems such as the housing crisis or child-care needs." This is a typical example of the kind of analysis reported in the Jenness article. One wishes that Waters had been longer on information and shorter on empty praise. Genuine information on events in Cuba today is scarce. The *Guardian*, for example, which is usually sympathetic to the Cuban leadership, has had no reports on the current rectification campaign. One can get bits and pieces from the bourgeois media, but hardly enough on which to base a judgment.

What facts we do have are primarily those presented by the SWP leadership. Based on these reports the facts appear to be as follows: Since early in 1987 the Cuban government has reversed its policy of allowing limited private enterprise, mainly in agriculture. It has, for example, closed the farmers' markets, in which peasants were able to sell their produce for whatever price it could bring. Also, the government has attempted to address a number of pressing social problems by mobilizing volunteer work brigades—using political motivation rather than economic incentive. It has been explained that a privileged bureaucracy was developing in Cuba, and that other forms of inequality were also beginning to emerge. The rectification process is designed to address this problem.

Of course, for most of the past decade the Socialist Workers Party leaders—Mary-Alice Waters among them—have been the Cuban CP's most strident cheerleaders. During that time they had nothing but praise for the very same policies of the Castro leadership which today they claim led to the growth of bureaucracy and inequality. Waters seems to be somewhat conscious of this problem, and acknowl-

edges that there has been confusion. Jenness writes, "Waters noted that she is often asked why the process of rectification was not begun earlier if Cuban leaders were aware that problems and abuses had been developing for many years." But her response to that question turned out to be an evasion. It consisted in an appeal to the impact of the victories in Nicaragua and Grenada on the consciousness and ability to act of the Cubans (she has, by the way, nothing to say of what impact the defeat of the Grenadian revolution may have had): "the 1979 victories in Grenada and Nicaragua . . . have made possible a new deepening of the revolution in Cuba as well." That may be true, but it hardly explains why it took *eight years* for the Cuban revolution to begin its current process of rectification.

Waters fails to come to grips with the real reasons for the problems which the Cuban workers' state faces today. They are not primarily to be found in any shortcoming of the Cuban people or even of the Cuban leadership. Cuba's problems have an objective basis, rooted in the continued imperialist domination of the world economy. Only an end to this domination, the development of a collective, planned, international economy, can create the kind of breathing space which countries like Cuba need to truly develop and prosper. Such economic growth, in turn, would do away with the grinding scarcity that breeds bureaucracy and inequality.

For nearly thirty years, the United States has been trying to destroy the Cuban workers' state. It sponsored an invasion, encouraged counterrevolutionary terrorists, imposed an economic blockade, and shut Cuba out of world markets. Whatever problems the Cuban people may have, they can be proud that they have held out against everything which Washington has thrown at them. Their very survival has been an inspiration to working people everywhere. However, that does not make life in Cuba any easier.

Allowing limited private enterprise within a society, such as Cuba, where the working class holds state power can sometimes improve living conditions for the people. For the past decade or so, until the rectification process began, the Cuban leadership followed such a path. This did not constitute a betrayal of socialism or an admission that capitalism is better. Similar policies have been pursued from time to time in every national state where capitalism has been overthrown—beginning with the New Economic Policy in the Soviet Union in the early 1920s. Understanding that socialism cannot be built within the borders of a single country and that a revolutionary leadership which has taken state power in any individual country has to do what it can to extend the socialist revolution internationally does not solve all problems. It is also necessary to run a country, day to day. People have to be fed, clothed, housed. This cannot be accomplished through slogans, but only by making the economy run.

However, there are risks to allowing private enterprise within a workers' state, limits to how far such measures can be taken without undermining the very basis of a planned economy based on pro-

duction for use rather than profit. Jenness has this to say about the problems which developed in Cuba: "Growing income differentials, falling productivity, shoddy quality, bureaucratic indifference to people's real needs . . . are trends that had been developing for a decade or more."

According to Waters the Cuban CP has, faced with this reality, chosen to attempt political motivation as a means for mobilizing volunteer labor, rather than continuing to rely on personal economic incentives. Cuba is short of housing, child care, and other social necessities, but the money is not there to provide them. The Cubans have had to make a hard decision—one of the many they have made since 1959. They have decided to tap the people's moral and spiritual resources to get more of the necessary work done.

But just as it was wrong to take the road of limited free enterprise without recognizing its limitations and risks, it is likewise a disastrous mistake to approach the current rectification as if it is a magical solution, without problems and contradictions of its own. Social mobilizations such as those now being emphasized in Cuba tend to promote uniformity and to stifle individual dissent and free thought—which are absolutely necessary to ensure technological advancement and economic development. If society is asking people to "volunteer," those who don't choose to volunteer can easily be made to feel a social ostracism. The pressure is to participate, whether it is truly voluntary or not. And if such a process becomes widespread it can begin to create resentment within the population, undermining support for the revolution.

When a generalized scarcity is the rule in society it is impossible for everyone (and extremely unlikely for the majority) to be motivated primarily on the basis of political or moral incentives. That is why every workers' state that has so far come into being has tended to vacillate, sometimes with a greater, sometimes a lesser, emphasis on material incentives for motivating the population. This is almost a necessity in order to keep a balance between the difficult contradictions which any such transitional society inevitably faces.

The Cubans are making hard choices, and it would be totally unfair to expect them always to make the right ones. They are attempting to run a country in the interests of the working people of the city and country, and they know best what their own needs and problems are. So far they have more than held their own, and that is as much as can be expected until the vast resources of the imperialist metropolises are taken over by the working class and placed at the disposal of the entire world.

It is quite correct to commend the Cubans' fighting spirit and revolutionary determination. It does them no service however, and it does the world revolution no service, to present this society which is struggling to survive as a model of socialist development. Yet this is precisely the approach that Mary-Alice Waters takes. By slavishly praising the Cubans' example, by failing to discuss their shortcomings and problems in an honest way,

she does nothing to advance the process of revolution in countries like Britain and the United States—revolutions which are ultimately the Cubans' only hope. By not telling the hard truth to working people she shows contempt for their intelligence, and she loses credibility. She fails to understand what Jim Cannon recognized seventy years ago, that the American revolution will be made in the United States; it will not be imported from Russia or, in this case, from Cuba. The same truth certainly applies in Britain.

Workers in the United States and Britain are, unfortunately, susceptible to the myth that capitalism provides a higher standard of living than "socialism," because the United States and Britain provide a higher standard of living than any country where the proletarian revolution has so far succeeded. Revolutionists have to explain why this is so: that to date socialist revolutions have occurred only in backward, underdeveloped, and usually war-ravaged countries. On top of this, most of these revolutions have been saddled with a parasitic bureaucracy.

What Waters did in her report was to glorify a bad situation. The volunteer work brigades in Cuba are not a "shining example" of "building socialism." They are a stopgap measure dictated by economic necessity. People should not have to work extra hours in order to have the housing, child-care centers, clinics, and other facilities which they need. The great tragedy is that any attempt to "create the resources necessary from our own soil, through our own labor" will inevitably fail. Economic self-sufficiency is impossible even for the richest and most technologically advanced nations. It is completely out of the question for the Cuban people, through their own efforts alone, to turn their island into a full-fledged socialist society.

By telling the truth Waters could have helped the Cubans more—by beginning a campaign to demand trade with Cuba and an end to the U.S.-sponsored economic blockade, by explaining the *real* causes of Cuba's problems, not pretending they don't exist. By telling the truth, Waters could have explained how truly oppressive imperialism is, and why Cuba's—and the world's—only hope for the future is the *overthrow* of imperialism, in Britain and the United States above all.

The Generalized Economic Crisis

Jack Barnes's report on the international economic crisis also did nothing to advance a Marxist understanding on this question.

A thorough discussion of the errors in Barnes's economic analysis is beyond the scope of this article. It should be noted, however, that while he accurately describes the worsening conditions faced by the working class in the advanced industrial countries, especially since the 1981-82 recession, he makes no reference whatsoever to its real cause—the crisis of *overproduction* currently faced by the imperialist system worldwide. This is a particularly striking omission. (Of course, *overpro-*

duction does not mean the production of more goods than society can use; it means the production of more goods than the capitalist class can sell at a profit.) This crisis of overproduction became a long-term feature of the world economic situation at the end of the 1960s, when the economies of Western Europe, especially West Germany, and Japan completed their reconstruction from the devastation of World War II.

Barnes presents several elements of an action program for the working class. These are not bad or wrong in themselves, but they hardly represent a rounded, complete response to the problems facing working people in the imperialist countries today. His report makes no mention of any significant battles in which working people are presently involved, and seems to be permeated with the idea that all of the important struggles are off in the distant future.

No one can deny, of course, that the future holds a sharpening of the class struggle throughout the world. However, we need to do more than speculate on what will happen next month, next year, or five years from now; we need to address the issues which are being posed right now. We must address the issues that have the greatest potential for mobilizing support in action around the present level of consciousness of workers and their allies, though of course with a view toward raising that consciousness and helping, through experience, to raise it to draw necessary lessons. This sort of transitional approach is completely lacking in the schematic programmatic discussion by Barnes.

To take only one example: He suggests that an important demand for working people in the United States and Britain is for a cancellation of third world debt. While revolutionary socialists certainly support this demand, and while it is important to explain the issues involved to working people, it is hardly an issue which is likely to mobilize many workers to take action in either the United States or Britain. Certainly the issue of stopping U.S. intervention in Central America is one in which working people are more interested, and it is objectively more important as well. Yet Barnes completely leaves it out of his report!

A False Concept of Internationalism

Barnes takes great pains to explain to his audience that "there is no such thing as *British* workers or *American* workers or *Australian* workers. . . . There are no separate national strategies for the working class of each country." The facts, however, show that this is a useless oversimplification. It is true that the national borders which divide the workers of the world are of no consequence compared to the class difference which divides us from our employers within our own countries. However, in each country there is a unique economic reality, a specific development of leadership within the working class movement, a different history, experience, geography, etc. All of these things affect the perspectives, strategies,

and tactics of working people. A similar reality may even exist *within* countries, especially a country as large as the United States.

While recognizing that the fundamental laws of capitalism are the same the world over, revolutionists have to take into account national and regional peculiarities and adjust their work accordingly. No international center, no national office for that matter, can dictate tactics to its sections or branches and expect to build a strong organization. Tactical decision-making has to be an interactive process between the center and those on the front lines of the struggle.

How interactive the decision-making process is in Barnes's international faction can be seen from Brian Grogan's report on British perspectives. It contains no strategic orientation for the Communist League of Britain. Grogan describes the many setbacks which British workers have suffered and the attacks on democratic rights, on immigrants, and on Ireland carried out by the British ruling class. However, the only response Grogan has to offer is "deepening the Communist League's base in the industrial working class and increasing its discussions and collaboration with other revolutionists and communists internationally . . . promotion and distribution of Pathfinder books and pamphlets throughout the British Isles . . . [and] integrating sales of the *Militant* into our political work here." He does not discuss revolutionary work inside the Labor Party, a movement to demand withdrawal of British troops from Ireland, or what to *do* in the four industrial unions which the CLB has arbitrarily chosen as its focus.

The decision to sell the *Militant* rather than publish a newspaper of its own has already begun to cause problems for the CLB, as even Jenness had to acknowledge in a sidebar to his article. A newspaper put out in New York simply cannot, even with the best of intentions, substitute for a revolutionary newspaper published in Britain itself. An international news service, such as *International Viewpoint*, can be an important *supplement* to a revolutionary newspaper, but it cannot be a *substitute*. Jenness disparages those who asked *Militant* salespeople, "Why can't you sell a *British* paper?" as narrow-minded national chauvinists, and compares them to supporters of protectionism. But it is natural that British workers and radicals would have little respect for an organization which, rather than presenting its own reporting and analysis, relies on people in another country to think and speak for them.

The attack on internationalism represented by the CLB conference goes deeper, however, than sales of publications. When Marx and Engels closed *The Communist Manifesto* with the words "Workers of the World, Unite!" they meant it as more than an abstract slogan. It was a concrete suggestion, that revolutionary workers join together in an international organization which could fight to end capitalist oppression the world over. The Fourth International was founded fifty years ago to finish the work that the First, Second, and Third Internationals could not.

The Fourth International strives to unite all revolutionary socialists in a single world party, to fight for social revolution in the advanced industrial countries, social revolution combined with national liberation in less-developed countries, and political revolution for proletarian democracy in bureaucratically degenerated and deformed workers' states. It was never intended to be monolithic or controlled by any dictatorial clique. Though Leon Trotsky was its principal founder, he never intended the Fourth International to be his personal monument, and even speculated that it may at some time be necessary that Trotskyists struggle as a minority within it.

Vigorous debate and disagreement are natural in any political organization made up of thinking people—and any other kind of political organization is worse than useless for the working class. However, when winning a debate with other revolutionists becomes more important than the fight of the working class against the capitalists, when factional loyalty becomes more important than party loyalty or loyalty to the working class as a whole, debate and discussion have turned into their opposites and become something destructive. They have been transformed into what the Marxist movement calls "dead-end factionalism."

Dead-end factionalism brought the British Socialist League to the brink of destruction, and Jack Barnes and Brian Grogan were the principal culprits. Since they have been completely unable to convince others in the Fourth International that the Cuban Communist Party is the source of all revolutionary wisdom, they have embarked on a course of wrecking the International, and it will be years before the damage they have done in Britain and the United States can be repaired.

Jack Barnes's international faction has to be exposed to the light of day and defeated politically, on each point of its false program. The entire International will become better educated and strengthened, and it will become prepared for future threats to its revolutionary integrity if that kind of fight is carried out. Jack Barnes is not the first of his kind, and he won't be the last.

Political organizations with Barnes's perspectives, such as the CLB or SWP, will never gain mass support in the working class. However, in both Britain and the United States the revolutionary left is infinitesimally small in comparison with the working class as a whole, and groups like the SWP or CLB can sometimes have a far greater impact than they deserve to. They can make it more difficult for revolutionary activists with something positive to offer to gain a hearing from working people. The entire Fourth International will have to work together to help revolutionists in Britain and the United States repair the damage which Barnes and his associates have done and put the process of building revolutionary parties in these two all-important countries back on the right track. ■

March 22, 1988

CECIL GLASS (1901-1988)

by Frank Lovell

Cecil Glass was an accomplished journalist and a leading participant in the international Marxist movement for the major part of his adult life. He died in Los Angeles after a long illness on March 21, four days short of his 87th birthday. He was born in England and, at the age of ten, was taken by his parents to South Africa where he spent his formative years and received his education. His social and political consciousness developed early, largely under the impact of World War I and the Russian Revolution. He was also profoundly affected by the injustices inflicted upon the Black population by South Africa's white society within the British colonial system.

The Communist International, under the leadership of Lenin and Trotsky, appealed to humanitarian instincts and provided a rational solution to the crimes of world capitalism, promising to eradicate imperialism. Glass, as a young student just approaching manhood, became an early and ardent supporter of the CI, and was a founding member of the South African Communist Party in 1921.

When the Stalinist bureaucracy in the Soviet Union betrayed the Marxist program of the CI and, in 1928, imposed upon it the self-serving theory of "socialism in one country," Glass remained true to the ideas that had brought him to the revolutionary working class movement. He rejected Stalinism and joined the Trotskyist Left Opposition.

In 1930 he was a foreign correspondent in China. He and the American journalist Harold Isaacs worked closely together in Shanghai at the time, and both sought to assist the Chinese Trotskyist movement in every way possible. Through their writings both men became associated with the liberation of China, Isaacs as the author of *The Tragedy of the Chinese Revolution* and Glass as the authoritative analyst of Chinese politics under the pen name Li Fu-jen.

Wang Fan-hsi, one of the leaders of the Trotskyist underground movement in Shanghai under the Chiang Kai-shek dictatorship, tells in his memoirs how he first met Li Fu-jen in 1935, at the beginning of the Sino-Japanese War. Most of the leading Trotskyists at the time were in jail, including Ch'en Tu-hsiu and P'eng Shu-tse. Ch'en was former head of the Chinese CP and had suffered bitter disillusionment with CI representatives from Moscow. He was distrustful of all foreigners (referred to among Chinese Communists by the nickname *Mao-tzu*, "hairy ones"). Wang was also distrustful of foreigners and had been misinformed about Li Fu-jen's background, but was persuaded to meet Li.

Years later Wang recalled this meeting. "The result was," Wang said, "that I formed a very good

impression of him. I asked straight out whether he had come to Shanghai as a representative of the International Secretariat of the Left Opposition. The question startled him, and he told me that he had come to China in the course of his work as a journalist and had never claimed to be a representative of the International Secretariat. He said that he had contacted the organization because he felt that it was his duty as a Trotskyist to do so, and asked me to convey this information to Ch'en Tu-hsiu. When I told Li that Liu Jen-ching had claimed that he had come to China in such a capacity, he was very indignant. With this problem out of the way, we swapped news about the movement both in China and internationally, and freely voiced our opinions. I discovered that he was an honest and sincere comrade, and was neither a bureaucrat, as I had previously suspected, nor an adventurer, of which there were many in Shanghai at that time. His sole aim was to participate in the work of the organization and to use his time in China to give us whatever help he could."

This judgment of Cecil Glass as a man of honesty and integrity was shared by all who knew him well and worked closely with him in the revolutionary movement, including Leon Trotsky and James P. Cannon.

In August 1937 Li Fu-jen met with Trotsky in Coyoacan, Mexico, and discussed some of the programmatic problems and principled questions confronting the Chinese section of the International Left Opposition. One such problem, as formulated by Li Fu-jen, was "the question as to whether our organization should, when opportunity occurs, take the initiative in forming anti-Japanese organizations in localities where such do not already exist." This question presented more complicated problems than are readily apparent and the ensuing discussion between Li and Trotsky was far-ranging. (Published in *Leon Trotsky on China*, Pathfinder Press, pp. 549-66.)

Li returned to Shanghai where he remained until a few days before the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, December 7, 1941. He resumed work as a journalist in New York during World War II. There he continued his political activity under the alias Frank Graves. As a staff member of the *Militant*, weekly newspaper of the Socialist Workers Party, he occasionally used the pen name John Liang. When the central leaders of the SWP went to jail in January 1944 for their opposition to the war, Graves took on the main responsibility for editing the paper. He also contributed to the party's theoretical journal, the *Fourth International*. When writing about developments in China his articles appeared under Li Fu-jen's byline.

After World War II Cecil Glass moved to Los Angeles where he worked closely with the leadership of the local SWP branches and with James P. Cannon who moved to Los Angeles in 1953. But most SWP members were not acquainted with him except through his writings. Never one to seek attention or formal positions of authority, Graves nevertheless served on the SWP National Committee—at the insistence of Cannon and other SWP leaders—from his wartime stint as editor of the *Militant* until 1963, when he

became an "advisory member" of the NC (a category that was discontinued in 1975).

The most fitting tribute to the life and work of Cecil Glass, revolutionary internationalist, is a reminder of his many contributions as Li Fu-jen in China and Frank Graves in the United States. (See reprint below.) All who were privileged to know him well and work closely with him held him in the highest esteem. ■

From the Arsenal of Marxism

ATOMIC BOMBS IMPERIL EXISTENCE OF HUMANITY New Imperialist Weapon Razes an Entire City

by Li Fu-jen

Barbarous capitalism, which for six years has inflicted upon the world the horrors and cruelties of war on a scale hitherto unknown, this week presented to mankind its newest and most deadly instrument of destruction—the atomic bomb.

The most closely guarded secret of the universe, which scientists of many countries labored for decades to uncover and harness to the peaceful purposes of social development, has been dragged to the light by the bloodstained rulers of capitalist society and harnessed to the foul purpose of imperialist war.

Scientists describe the epoch-making discovery as heralding the "age of atomic energy." The vast, long-hidden energy that lies within the atom has at long last been unlocked, not in order that its unlimited power may be applied to easing and enriching the lives of humankind, but in order to snuff them out.

'Rain of Ruin'

In revealing the great scientific discovery and announcing that it had already been used to wipe out the Japanese city of Hiroshima, President Truman on August 6 announced to the Japanese people that they now faced a "rain of ruin from the air the like of which has never been seen on this earth."

This high spokesman of American imperialism went on to say that the atomic bomb represented the "harnessing of the basic power of the universe . . . the force from which the sun draws its power." A single bomb, weighing a mere 1,200 pounds, has more destructive power than 20,000 tons of TNT and more than 2,000 times the blast power of the British "Grand Slam" bomb used to destroy Germany.

Into the work of unlocking the secret of the atom and harnessing its force to the deadly purposes

of imperialist war went \$2,000,000,000 of American money alone. The British imperialists, who collaborated, expended additional funds. For four years a total of 135,000 men and women labored on the immense project in this country. The scientific facilities of the greatest universities in England and the United States were drafted for the job. The best brains in the scientific world were devoted to it.

A Vast Project

The great capitalist corporations participated, with that infamous "Merchant of Death," the du Pont chemical trust, prominently to the fore. Three huge plants for production of the atomic bomb were built. Two are located at the Clinton Engineer Works, on a government reservation of 59,000 acres, 18 miles west of Knoxville, Tennessee. At this site a whole new city, Oak Ridge, was created to accommodate the people working on the project. A third plant is the Hanford Engineer Works on a government reservation of 430,000 acres in an isolated area 15 miles northwest of Pasco, Washington. Here, too, a whole new city—Richland—was created.

With all this vast expenditure of human labor and wealth the atomic bomb was made and production on a vast scale is continuing with a labor force of 179,000 men and women. What horrors does this newest weapon of death and destruction promise to an already horror-ridden world! Here are some descriptive reports:

According to a British Ministry of Aircraft representative in London: "Dropped on a town, one bomb would be equivalent to a severe earthquake and would utterly destroy the place."

According to a United Press dispatch from Pearl Harbor: "The present bomb was understood to have the power to blind persons within a five-mile radius and to kill within four miles. The searing blast was said to fuse the earth, resulting in a silica-like formation."

This article is reprinted from the Militant, August 11, 1945.

A Searing Blast

This, then, is the fiendish weapon which the rulers of our decaying capitalist society have devised for the more complete and efficient destruction of mankind. It is the supremest irony, as it is the greatest tragedy, that the most wondrous discovery in all human history should be capable of utilization only as a means of decimating mankind and all his works.

The atomic bomb is to be developed and "perfected," Truman made clear. Equally clear was his statement that it will be years before atomic energy can be employed "commercially." It could be used to drive great ships across the oceans, to power railroad trains, furnish light. Coal-mining and other hazardous occupations could be totally eliminated. Undreamed-of ease and prosperity would be within human grasp.

But this is not to be. Truman does not intend to put the coal owners out of business, nor the electric power interests. So the utilization of atomic energy is to be controlled and tightly monopolized in the hands of the ruling class, used only for destruction.

Only for Destruction

In the disclosure of the production and first use of the atomic bomb, mankind has been served a final grim warning. The capitalist barbarians have in their hands the most fearful instrument of destruction the mind of man has ever conceived. They intend to use it. Unless mankind rises up to destroy capitalism, capitalism will extirpate mankind.

The spokesmen of capitalism are themselves nervous and fearful over the new discovery, for they realize it will be no respecter of boundaries. "Frankly I am scared," writes John W. Campbell, a physicist, in the liberal *PM*. "I am scared because I fear people won't fully realize that, from this day on, war is impractical. This isn't a new bomb. It's something that never was before. It's the power to reach the stars and the power to kill the human race."

Liars at Work

This "liberal" lies in his teeth. War will never be "impractical" as long as capitalism is permitted to live. Capitalism, in its mad imperialist hunt for profits, will stop at nothing. Two world wars have proved that.

The *New York Times* lies when it declares: "Civilization and humanity can now survive only if there is a revolution in mankind's political thinking."

Others echo the thought when they assert that now another war becomes "unthinkable." They said that after the first world war. Such soothing utterances are designed to befuddle the people and prevent them from taking the only course which can now prevent the whole world from destruction in a series of fiery holocausts, the road of the socialist revolution.

The truth is that capitalist imperialism and war are inseparable. Capitalism in its decay and death agony cannot live without war. All the wonders of science and technology are at the disposal of the criminal rulers of society. They have not hesitated, in the past, to employ the most deadly weapons they could devise. Nor will they hesitate now or in the future to use the dreadful atomic bomb to gain their nefarious ends.

A Dire Warning

To the working class of America and all the world this week's events must be a last dire warning. Only the working class, uniting with it all the poor and oppressed of city and country, can destroy the foul capitalist system. *Unless they do destroy capitalism, capitalism will surely destroy them.*

The working class reply to this new fiendish device must be a quickening of the struggle to end capitalism and establish a socialist society in which war will be banished forever and the great wonders of science devoted to the preservation and enrichment of life. ■

Corrections:

In *Bulletin IDOM* No. 51, Judith Arkwright—author of the article "As Early as Possible, as Late as Necessary: Women Fight for Abortion Rights in Britain"—should have been identified as a member of the International Socialist Group of Britain.

In *Bulletin IDOM* No. 50, the article "Permanent Revolution: The Nicaraguan Experience," by Michael Lowy, contained a quotation from the August 16, 1983, *New York Times* (footnote 12) which should have read as follows: "About 60 percent of the economy is thought, nominally at least, to be in private hands. But because the government controls all the banks, all access to foreign currency, and all jurisdiction over imports, and sets production quotas, and designates priorities, the businessmen are not much more than crown agents whose salaries the government does not need to pay."

NOTEBOOKS FOR THE GRANDCHILDREN

by Mikhail Baitalsky

20. Features of the New Order

In the 1920s, we were proud of our Bolshevik bluntness. Later on, we became convinced that the coarse and allegedly proletarian bluntness of Stalin served only to mask his hypocrisy and treachery, his intriguing and aspiration for power—in other words, all the qualities that flourished in the Byzantine courts and Eastern satraps. The handiwork of the capital's news reporters allowed us to sniff the aromas from this kitchen, where a great cook was in charge, justifying the old prediction: "This cook will prepare only spicy dishes."¹

In truth, I knew nothing, and only kept inhaling the Byzantine aromas, which do nothing to sharpen the conscience. You become a cynic, that's for sure. Volodya Serov said just that: "You are a *kynik*, Misha." He liked to express himself in an affected way, saying not "cynic" but *kynik*, using the Greek word. I stayed close only with Volodya. Sasha Ratskin was closer to him than to me. It never even occurred to me to visit Boris Gorbатов. I didn't even want to phone him. And he didn't seek me out either. How this is explained, I don't know. Had we grown up? Or had the atmosphere in Moscow changed?

However, I would often go over to visit Grigory Yevgenevich. He had come up in the world. He had revitalized *Evening Moscow* and it was flourishing; and for this he was praised. *Evening Moscow* energetically fought for a well-ordered existence. Give us electric irons and pleasant gramophone records with the cheerful songs of Dunayevsky! Electric irons and little electric motors had only begun to appear in Moscow stores, and in my leisure hours I tried my hand at inventing, creating a gramophone with an unusual drive gear and all sorts of other mechanical things.

Obedying an instruction from above, Tsy-pin proposed I make a speech about my past at a meeting of the newspaper staff. So as not to seem cowardly, I agreed: I was, you know, in the Trotskyist Opposition. I later left it, and I am now honestly trying to keep the promises which I have given to the party. Everyone listened, with heads bowed. And in reality: if I am a liar, what is my speech worth? If I am not a liar, why are they kicking me around?

The evil god of revenge kicks you so you don't lose consciousness in the mud prepared for you by the good goddess of oblivion. Stalin considered it necessary to incessantly remind people about the Trotskyists. True, at the height of the Opposition passions on the eve of the Fifteenth Congress,

In 1977, a manuscript totaling hundreds of pages arrived in this country from the Soviet Union—the memoirs of Mikhail Baitalsky, who was in his middle 70s at the time and living in Moscow. His work consists of a series of nine "notebooks" which describe his life as a Ukrainian Jewish revolutionary militant. He narrates how, as a teenager inspired by the October revolution, he joined the Communist Youth, tells about his participation in the Red Army during the Civil War years that followed 1917, his disenchantment with the developing bureaucracy under Stalin, and his subsequent experiences in Stalin's prison camps.

To the very end of his life Baitalsky remained devoted to the ideals of the October revolution. He says that he is writing "for the grandchildren" so that they can know the truth of the revolution's early years.

The first installment and an introduction by the translator, Marilyn Vogt-Downey, appeared in Bulletin IDOM No. 36, December 1986.

according to official statistics, there were only 4,000 altogether, as against 724,000 who voted for the Central Committee's line. From a genuine party point of view it is not important how many people at various moments over a several-year period voted for one or another proposal of the Opposition. What matters is how many, in the final analysis, supported the Central Committee's line. History textbooks, beginning with the *Short Course*, cite these two figures: 4,000 and 724,000. And naturally the perplexing question arises: Against such a small handful, barely more than one half of one percent of the party's membership, why was there such a barrage of fire and so much vile literature, such a stockpile of acrimony for decades to come? And if they were only a handful, why, at every meeting in subsequent years, were hidden Trotskyists discovered? Do you remember how it was with Volodya Marinin? And they were not only "discovered," but in fact, for being guilty of this, many tens of thousands of people were killed.

Stalin needed, on the one hand, to show that those who doubted his loyalty to Leninism were a paltry few. On the other hand, he had to convince the people that the enemies (and the main enemy was the Trotskyists) were very numerous, so as to increase his worthiness by being the one to expose them.

Of the 4,000 Trotskyists, a great portion offered, as I did, a statement of their withdrawal from the

Opposition, and those who did not were driven into exile. What place was there for Trotskyists in the political life of the country? To agitate? Organize demonstrations? Print proclamations? By the 1930s, they could do nothing of the kind. Not one indictment of Stalin and Vyshinsky against the so-called Right-Trotskyist bloc said a word about the crime of agitation. What besides this could a former Trotskyist have done? Tell anecdotes? In reality, political anecdotes were then in vogue; they were heard around Moscow much more than in later years when Stalin managed to eradicate even humor, replacing it with broad, toothy, optimistic, photogenic smiles.

With anecdotes, neither the teller nor the accuser could get far. What was the best charge to bring against the Trotskyists when the decision was made to go after them in a real way? (About these years that were soon to come, more will be said later.) Terror, wrecking, espionage. Several thousand anecdote-tellers sounds ludicrous, but several thousand terrorists and spies—now, this sounds serious. But for the time being, the espionage version was not yet set in motion—the kebab had not yet finished cooking. To begin with, he heated up the first course—the sour soup of Trotskyist repentance. Get on your knees and beat your breasts!

The first price Stalin lowered (there are people who are eternally grateful to him for lowering the prices) was the price of human dignity. They made some knuckle under; others voluntarily bent from the waist in a degrading bow of hypocritical devoutness.

What is the most individual aspect of a person? It was to this absolutely unique feature of individuality that Stalin and his people attached the greatest importance: fingerprints. They wet your fingers in black ink and press them, one after another, on a special form ruled in ten squares with notations: Right hand—thumb, index, middle, fourth (from that minute you were no longer anonymous);² Left hand—thumb, index, etc.

I did not have to wait long to learn that among the prisoners this procedure was called playing the piano. The ten squares were ten keys. Now they can find you anywhere—so you're a unique person after all.

Photography—full face and profile—is an auxiliary science. Facial features are changeable. When in 1932 the passport system that had been abolished by the October revolution was unexpectedly introduced, we had to have our pictures taken more often than previously. Surprising as it may sound, we got along perfectly well through the first fifteen years of Soviet power without the tsarist passports.

This might seem inconceivable to the youth, accustomed to identifying adulthood with the receipt of a passport. While it is possible to hide from the truth, it is impossible to escape from it.

Mayakovsky's poem, "On the Soviet Passport," concerns another document. The existence of another document with the same name has deliberately and persistently led many generations of schoolchildren into error. Mayakovsky wrote not about the internal

passport but about the passport for traveling abroad, which is issued, according to international law, by the government of every country to its citizens for trips to another country. Returning from abroad to Moscow, Mayakovsky surrendered his red leather passport to the People's Commissariat of International Affairs, and again began to make do with his trade union card, and without any travel documents. Not because he wanted to circumvent Soviet law but because there was no such law in our country, beginning with the October days of 1917 and until the December days of 1932.

To contemporary youth, the passport seems so intrinsic to socialism that no one is surprised to read that the rocket Luna-9 was issued a passport to the moon. A strange artistic image! Could it really have stood at the door to the passport official's office? For the first fifteen years of the revolution the idea of a passport was more remote than the moon for the workers of our country. Who would have expected passports to be brought back?

Complete collectivization could not, of course, come to pass painlessly, even if all the provincial committee secretaries had not rushed to make a name for themselves in the competition by completing the collectivization plan ahead of schedule. Being incapable of foreseeing the results of their own measures, the Stalinists could not prepare for what was sure to come. As a result of Stalin's peasant policy, a mass exodus of peasants from the villages to the cities began—a genuine rout. There are squares in front of railroad stations not only in Moscow, but in all the cities. I do not undertake here to come up with a way this human deluge should have been dealt with, but I fully understand that the passport system was not introduced due to idle caprice. It was a stopgap measure, the usual Stalinist emergency command, on a national scale. The one who decreed it knew that he would not win particular popularity; the people had not forgotten the hated tsarist *pachports* [passports]. Through this, a new variant was introduced, compelling the peasants, who not long ago had rejected the *pachport* to suddenly wish they had one and to request one from their chairperson.

The rules of the newly introduced passport system required the urban dwellers to have a passport in order to live anywhere. This was strictly observed for many years. House superintendents and porters were responsible for everyone who lived there without a passport—they didn't say "lived" but "hid." And urban industrial and office workers were required to have their passports with them. But not collective farm workers. They were not issued passports at all.³ Thus, a collective farm worker could not go anywhere outside the settlement without the permission of the collective farm chairperson—where will he manage to go without a passport? And in the Kalanchevsky Square, the long-desired order was established.

Deciding complex economic and social problems by means of administrative measures is tempting for its seeming efficiency: once you decide, it's done.

But this is no more than self-deception. It decides nothing. The time comes when it is discovered that the problem remains but it is less apparent, hidden in an administrative cloak. Earlier, there was the one problem, now the problem of the cloak has been added to it. What do you do about the cloak?

The Stalinist passport system survived its creator. It is antisocialist and antisocial. As long as it exists, all talk about liquidating the contradictions between the city and the countryside remains hypocritical chatter. What kind of liquidation of contradictions can go on when impassable delimitations have been created—where you can go and where you cannot go? There are cities of one kind and cities of another. And below them all—there is the quite special category of the village.

The very complex problems of the working class population's migration have not been studied to this day (and there can be no thought of their having been solved), most of all because the passport system creates a distorted picture of the movement of the human deluge. Planning through the passport office prevents scientific planning.

* * *

From Volodya Serov I once heard the German proverb: "After dinner, you argue the other side." I found myself no longer able to argue the way I had argued before dining in the Prague restaurant. Indeed, I was an educator of the people, although a minor one. But did I know the people, even if I had conducted an interview with workers building the subway? I did not ask them the question most central for me (and if I had asked them, I could not have expected an honest answer)—What did they, the masses, think of us, their educators?

Taking advantage of the fact that his portrait had not been in the newspapers, Garun al-Rashid walked about Bagdad without being recognized. He went into a baker's shop and asked who was the worst, and listened as they cursed him. For discrediting the caliph in those savage times, you did not get even five weeks in a prison camp. It would appear that the residents of Bagdad, with no one holding them back, would have slandered Garun to the death. But they composed immortal tales about him.

Garun knew what another great caliph did not know: If you want people to approve of you in centuries to come, don't silence them when they reproach you today.

In the court of Caliph Not Garun, I was among those who were sent to the people to ask their opinions. Of course, the inhabitants of this Bagdad unanimously attested that he was great.

The halo of greatness was not created in one year. Moreover, it did come about without incident. Chiefs were found who imagined that the halo extended to them. Intoxicated with power, they intended to create little cults about themselves. On the first of May, 1936, the secretary of the Khar'kov provincial committee, Demchenko, issued an order, through lower-level figures, that his por-

trait was to be hung from the balconies of homes. An adequate number of them had been printed up. Because there was a paper shortage, Demchenko permitted the paper supplies reserved for schoolbooks to be used for his portraits.

The finishing touch of the new order came only in 1938, with the publication of *A Short Course of the History of the AUCP(B)*. In it, everything necessary for the new course was said. But in 1932, which we are talking about now, they had not yet invented the absolutely precise adjective for every noun, allowing for no deviation: resentment—wrathful; indication—historical; accomplice—corrupt; and epoch—Stalinist.

The epoch of epithets carved in stone had not yet come and above all the themes were those of Magnitka, the Stalingrad Tractor Factory, and Nikita Izotov—themes of the activities of the people and not of one leader.⁴ But how my mother was surviving in Odessa, I did not know. This subject was not considered suitable for a sketch. The words "the great engineer" were already in the air. Kaganovich had put this in circulation. "The stoker raked the furnace coals"—"the engineer placed his hand on the lever." However, the time for composing false history had not yet arrived.

On the other hand, after 35 years, the false history has become well embedded in the people's consciousness. A young engineer friend of mine, a learned and cultured person, a party member, who had never in his life studied in a political school, said to me: "When Lenin expelled Trotsky from the USSR . . ."

That's history to him and that is the only kind of history he knows!

Of course, he never actually read this anywhere. And no one ever directly instilled such nonsense into him. It was suggested to him obliquely, while silence was maintained about the fact, for example, that Trotsky, all during the time Lenin was alive, was a member of the Politbureau. Silence was maintained about thousands of things, the simple enumeration of which would take a whole book: the purge of 1921, party maximum, restricted distribution centers, passports, tempos of collectivization. I have very superficially related a small portion of what has been concealed.

The concealing of a certain part of the past is closely linked with silence about the same certain part of the present—silence which is comfortably explained by considerations of avoiding sensation, the responsibility of a literary figure, and so on. Here is an example of our distaste for sensation.

When the Indian premier Lal Bahadur Shastri suddenly died in 1965, the Western press reported the surprising news that he had left his enormous family absolutely without resources. As premier, he had never saved a cent. Worse than that, he had turned over a not insignificant share of his salary to some national fund, leaving himself a certain Indian party maximum. Our newspapers reported in a businesslike way that Shastri had had no bank account or property in land, and that the Indian government was putting his family on a pension.

Sensational details are unnecessary, particularly those reminding the readers of party maximum. Examples of such newspaper and historical accounts number in the thousands.

The result is a hothouse atmosphere regarding knowledge of the world. And if generation after generation grows up in this, then it's no surprise that you hear that Lenin expelled Trotsky or that the Finnish war was an authentic defensive war on our part.⁵

I worked at *Evening Moscow* just during the time when Hitler came to power. In our country, meanwhile, even to this day, virtually no one knows that Hitler did not abolish the parliamentary form of government. The Reichstag continued to exist, but only those who pleased Hitler were elected to it, and all the laws introduced for ratification before this "popular" chamber of deputies were approved unanimously. The trial of Dimitrov and his comrades was illuminated in *Evening Moscow*.⁶ I even wrote some special features on it, but I did not know one thing: the Germans did not read my special features or even Karl Radek's articles, about the Leipzig trial, but only the lies printed in *Volksischer Beobachter* and other Nazi papers. Twelve years later, serving with the Soviet occupation forces in Germany, I asked many Germans if they remembered the trial. They answered with a question: "Which Dimitrov? The one who set the Reichstag on fire?"

The entire world knew who really set the German Reichstag on fire, except the Germans themselves. After the war, in the camps, I met German youth who had been to secondary school. They had no idea that the poems about Lorelei, which had become a popular song in Germany, were written by Heine. Heine was a Jew and in Hitler's time, his name and all his books were no more. If any German publishing house had decided, without asking Goebbels, to print one of Heine's works of poetry, it would have created a sensation! This notwithstanding the fact that his poems were a hundred years old.

One very sensible Austrian with a family in Vienna confirmed that the Viennese atmosphere engendered fewer donkeys than did the Berlin atmosphere. He told me when we were sitting on a mound of dirt outside the camp barracks: "The Fuehrer was a complete idiot, *ein kompletter Idiot!* Books can be removed without a trace; nothing is simpler. And they burned them. The cretins! Listen, *mein Freund*, I am not a Communist, but I have read some Marx. What did he say? 'Nations are not forgiven negligence.'"

"In *The Eighteenth Brumaire*," I shouted. Raising a finger in the air, I recited several lines engraved in my memory from my favorite book, which at one time, sitting in the reading room of the House of Unions, I had ecstatically summarized. "A nation, like a woman, is not forgiven the unguarded

hour in which the first adventurer that came along could violate her.'

"Oh, yes! Can you imagine? Some scoundrel first frightens her; he invents conspiracies and fires, so that she in her fear presses ever closer to him. And then, seizing the moment, he drags her into the grass. When she realizes what has happened, it's too late. From that time on, she can only try to make herself believe that she really loves him and forget how he overpowered her the first time. And her children know nothing about this. They imagine that their mother had such a passionate and tender romance! *Mein lieber Gott*, how easy it is to make fools of our children! And mother herself helps instill in the children that version of her romance. She's embarrassed, after all, and pitiable. And she herself wants to believe that the conspiracies and fires that her violator invented to make her lose her head, in fact did exist. Thus is created the rosy family myth. The seducer and impertinent rogue is transformed into a courageous defender of a woman's honor, and the woman's own negligence is depicted as a virtue. And the children believe, they believe everything because they themselves are not able to lie."

"What, in fact, do they teach in your schools?" I asked.

"My friend, children can be made to believe any stupidity, especially if beforehand you remove everyone who can expose it. And who can really know what took place before we came along? They can even turn inside out what we have seen with our own eyes, and say we viewed it incorrectly." ■

[Next month: "More About Boris and the Features of the Time"]

NOTES

1. Lenin made this prediction about Stalin during the Tenth Congress (March 1921), while arguing against the appointment of Stalin as general secretary. See "On Lenin's Testament," in *Lenin's Fight Against Stalinism*, Pathfinder, p. 42.

2. The Russian word for the fourth finger also means "anonymous."

3. In the late '60s they began to issue passports to collective farmers.

4. These are examples of collective projects for which collective credit was given numerous workers. Nikita Izotov was a model worker held up for emulation. Baitalsky's point is that in 1932 it was still possible to praise the work of ordinary people and Stalin did not automatically get the credit for every social accomplishment.

5. Soviet troops invaded Finland on November 30, 1939.

6. Georgi Dimitrov (1882-1949), a Bulgarian Communist who had moved to Germany, attracted world attention in 1933 when the Nazis imprisoned and tried him and others on charges of having set the Reichstag on fire. He defended himself courageously at the trial and was acquitted. He became a Soviet citizen and served as executive secretary of the Comintern from 1934 to 1943. He acted as the chief proponent of the Popular Front policy adopted at the Comintern's Seventh Congress in 1935.

Militant and the Moscow Trials Campaign

While my adrenalin is still racing and my jaw still dropped, I thought it a good time to express my upset by writing a letter to your periodical.

I am an endorser of the Moscow Trials Campaign Committee and worked on publicity for the March 19 rally in New York [see article on page 9 of this issue]. Having drawn up an ad to be placed in periodicals with a readership we would like to reach, I called the *Militant*.

A man who identified himself as the business manager answered the phone and while there was a slight pause when I told him the name of the committee, he proceeded to give me their advertising rates and copy deadline. Two days before the deadline I asked my daughter to take the copy down to them. She called to find out how late they were open. They asked her why she was coming, questioned her about the ad, put her on hold, and shortly informed her that they wouldn't print the ad.

I called the next day and was transferred to "Susan" in the editorial department. Susan proceeded to tell me that they had never agreed to run the ad and they weren't interested in it. I was surprised and said so. This seemed to me exactly the kind of campaign and defense work which the SWP was noted for. Moreover, when I had spoken with the business manager he had not indicated any problem with the ad. I was told that I had never spoken with the business manager or anyone else at the *Militant*. I responded, as graciously as I could, that they couldn't tell me whom I had or had not spoken with, and that I was frankly shocked by the whole episode. Why didn't they wish to run the ad? What was their reason? Susan said they didn't have to explain their reason, they just didn't want to run this particular ad. She had nothing more to say about it, and since I had no further business with them the conversation was over.

Is this how the SWP typically deals with the readers of its press? My head is still spinning.

Gloria Albee
New York

In Defense of Solidarity's Anti-Intervention Work

Samuel Adams's essay ("Solidarity's Contradictory Perspectives for Its Anti-Intervention Work," *Bulletin IDOM*, February 1988) contains two significant inaccuracies, which we are writing to correct.

First, the article quotes Solidarity's 1987 convention resolution, "when it comes to the section on anti-intervention work, building labor anti-intervention activity is strictly a secondary concern." If Adams or the editors had read the resolution more carefully, they would have seen an explicit statement (p. 14) that "Obviously, building labor anti-intervention activity is also a priority wherever we are in a position to do so." The resolution goes on to suggest possibilities for

anti-intervention and anti-apartheid work in connection with our broader labor perspectives.

A second, more serious distortion, repeated several times in the Adams article, is the allegation that "Solidarity has developed an empirical orientation toward those who happen to be prominent within the leadership of the anti-intervention movement at the given moment . . . despite the fact that they have programs with which Solidarity basically disagrees. . . . Solidarity gives its priority to CISPES, the other solidarity networks, Mobe, and even the Pledge of Resistance."

This is quite false. Solidarity's interest in building CISPES and local solidarity committees is not primarily "empirical" but political. The author's notion that we have more in common "programmatically" with the Emergency National Council (ENC) is a strange misunderstanding. We regard CISPES's program, which combines active political solidarity with the Salvadoran revolutionary forces, support and material aid to the mass-based Salvadoran popular movement, and broad anti-intervention organizing among the U.S. public, as essentially sound and supportable.

It would be more correct to say we had an "empirical" interest in the ENC, which from its founding conference through the April Actions played a positive role in arguing the necessity of a mass mobilization. In our opinion, the fact that the ENC since then has declined while CISPES has developed a stronger organization with a committed membership and democratic structures is due first and foremost to the basic "programmatically" soundness of CISPES.

The simple fact is that for all intents and purposes the Emergency National Council does not exist, while CISPES remains the largest and most active national organization opposed to U.S. intervention in Central America. If a visible broadly based national coalition opposed to U.S. intervention in Central America existed, and there certainly is a very real objective need for such a coalition—you may be assured that Solidarity would be a staunch supporter of and active participant in such a coalition. Given the absence of such a coalition, and as Marxist materialists we assume that the editors of *Bulletin IDOM* recognize the unfortunate fact that the ENC is not such a coalition, Solidarity's perspectives include working with groups which do exist, such as CISPES, which we argue is playing a vital role in building sentiment against U.S. intervention in Central America. Solidarity members also work with and support a wide range of other local coalitions, anti-intervention groups, and solidarity organizations. Solidarity members, for example, in addition to building CISPES, have played important roles in building the October 1986 demonstration in Chicago against U.S. intervention and the April 1987 demonstrations in Washington and San Francisco. In Los Angeles they have been active in local coalitions.

Where Samuel Adams makes a fundamental (and sectarian, in our judgment) methodological error is in counterposing the need for broad national anti-intervention coalitions to the need for nation-

al and local organizations in solidarity with the revolutions in Central America. Both are necessary, and both can play vital roles in opposing U.S. imperialism in Central America. This is not the anti-Vietnam war movement. This is 1988 and not 1968. ENC is not even a shadow of NPAC (National Peace Action Coalition) or the NMC (New Mobilization Committee). Moreover, not all of the strategic and tactical imperatives of the antiwar movement of the 1960s necessarily obtain today. Consider the question of multiple versus single issue demonstrations and coalitions. Technically, the mass demonstration in Washington in April 1987 was a multi-issue demonstration. Yet it was apparent to anyone who built or participated in the demonstration that its political thrust and essence was in opposition to U.S. intervention in Central America. The issue of U.S. intervention in Central America was scarcely dissolved in or subordinated to a smorgasbord of other issues. Usually the "other" issues linked with a demand for no U.S. intervention in Central America include opposition to apartheid in South Africa, an end to racism in the United States, a demand for jobs, peace, and justice, and opposition to nuclear warfare. Surely these are not divisive issues which drive people away from a demonstration rather than attracting them.

As for Solidarity's alleged lack of interest in building labor opposition to U.S. intervention in Central America, this is a completely spurious contention. Solidarity members active in unions helped build labor contingents for the April 1987 Washington demonstration. Solidarity members have also built meetings for the Salvadoran Trade Unionists in Exile (CISSE) and in support of FENASTRAS, the Salvadoran Trade Union Federation.

While there are important issues under debate within the anti-intervention and solidarity movements, a sterile juxtaposition of anti-intervention work versus solidarity work does not contribute to the debate. For our part, we wish the ENC or some similar coalition could play a key role in mobilizing opposition to U.S. intervention in Central America. But the ENC does not play such a role, nor does any other coalition at the moment. CISPES, on the other hand, is actively engaged in building opposition to U.S. intervention. It is precisely because of the role it plays that CISPES deserves the support of Solidarity and any other organization or individual opposed to U.S. imperialism, including Samuel Adams.

We welcome discussions with *Bulletin IDOM* such as this and look forward to collaborating with members of the Fourth Internationalist Tendency on anti-intervention work and other projects of mutual interest. We hope that the editors of *Bulletin IDOM* will recognize the importance of CISPES and actively support its work. And we hope that the editors of *Bulletin IDOM* will join us and thousands of other activists in building the projected June 11th march in New York City against nuclear arms and U.S. intervention in Central America.

Mike Patrick
member of the Political
Committee of Solidarity.
Chicago

Any reader who would like a free reprint of the article by Samuel Adams discussed here by Patrick should make a written request to: Bulletin IDOM, P.O. Box 1317, New York, NY 10009.

OPEU (Continued from page 18)

Goldschmidt's next move was to threaten to lock out workers, saying that the union violated the law by holding a rolling strike after issuing a notice of a general strike. Or as he put it, "the question is, can they roll through an agency, have us replace the staff, then bring the people back, displace our substitutes, and then go out again?" Indeed, that was exactly what we wanted them to worry about.

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time in history. We won an additional \$9.1 million—an average of one million dollars for every day we were on strike. In addition, we saved fully paid health insurance, preserved contract language which guarantees layoff by seniority, won a 10 percent pay equity increase for 4,800 workers and 5 percent for an additional 800. Plus there was a \$70 cash, tax-free strike bonus for everyone in the bargaining unit. Still, there was no doubt in anyone's mind that the most important thing we won was pride in the fact that we are now a union.

A month after the strike OPEU held its annual General Council. One evening there was a special program to honor the Flying Squadron. During that evening, and during the next day, workers spontaneously started chanting, "UNION! UNION!" That says it all. ■

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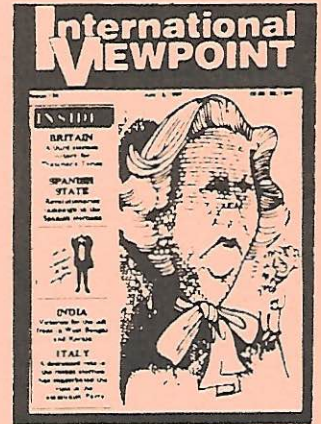
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