

Bulletin in Defense of Marxism

No. 78

October 1990

\$3.00

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| FIT National Conference Sets Goal of a New, United Fourth Internationalist Organization in the U.S. by Steve Bloom | 1 |
| A Call by the Fourth Internationalist Tendency: For the Reconstitution of a United Movement of the Fourth International in the U.S. | 1 |
| Bush Golfs as Opposition Grows to Middle East War by Tom Barrett | 2 |
| Notes on Kuwaiti History and Society by Anu Kumar Munroe | 3 |
| Discussion on the Middle East Iraq's Invasion of Kuwait: What Position for Revolutionary Socialists? by Dave Riehle and Samuel Adams | 4 |
| Imperialist Troops Out of the Gulf! by the United Secretariat Bureau of the Fourth International | 6 |
| U.S. Unions Seek Legislative Ban on Scabs by Richard Scully | 7 |
| Savings and Loan Bailout—Welfare for the Rich and Corrupt by Richard Scully | 11 |
| Amnesty Campaign Organized for U.S. Political Prisoners by Lloyd D'Aguilar | 12 |
| An Extraordinary Event: Ernest Mandel and Gregor Gysi Debate in East Berlin! | 14 |
| Potential for a Conscious, Working Class Revolutionary Movement in the USSR by Marilyn Vogt-Downey | 16 |
| Discussion by Soviet Revolutionaries | 21 |
| Fourth International Youth Camp—1990 by Tammy Hall, Lisa Landphair, and Keith Mann | 24 |
| Appeal to Members of the Socialist Workers Party by the FIT National Organizing Committee | 27 |
| Open Letter to Jack Barnes by Ben Stone | 28 |
| 'Why Does the SWP Still Exclude the FIT from Its Bookstores and Public Events?' | 29 |
| Obituaries Jake Cooper (1916-1990), Tamara Deutscher (1913-1990) | 30 |
| From the Arsenal of Marxism Socialism and Democracy by James P. Cannon | 32 |
| Reviews Story of Steel, by Haskell Berman The German Greens: Socialism and Ecology, by Michael Löwy | 37 |

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.

FIT members and supporters are involved in a broad range of working class struggles and protest movements in the U.S. We are activists in unions, women's rights groups, antiracist organizations, coalitions opposed to U.S. intervention, student formations, and lesbian and gay rights campaigns. We help organize support for oppressed groups here and abroad—such as those challenging apartheid in South Africa and bureaucratic rule in China, Eastern Europe, and the USSR. We participate in the global struggle of working people and their allies through our ties with the world organization of revolutionary socialists—the Fourth International.

The FIT was created in the winter of 1984 by members expelled from the Socialist Workers Party because they opposed abandoning the Trotskyist principles and methods on which the SWP was founded and built for more than half a century. We tried to win the SWP back to a revolutionary Marxist perspective, and called for the reunification of Fourth Internationalists in the U.S. through readmission to the party of all who had been expelled in the anti-Trotskyist purge. The continuing degeneration of the SWP reached a qualitative turning point when it formally severed fraternal relations with the Fourth International in June of 1990. Our central task now is to reconstitute a united U.S. sympathizing section of the Fourth International from among all those in this country who remain loyal to the FI's program and organization (currently belonging to the FIT, Socialist Action, and Solidarity) as well as through the recruitment of workers, students, Blacks, women, and other activists who can be won to a revolutionary internationalist outlook.

Bulletin in Defense of Marxism, No. 78, October 1990

Closing date September 8, 1990

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FIT National Conference Sets Goal of a New, United Fourth Internationalist Organization in the U.S.

by Steve Bloom

Delegates from across the country, representing Local Organizing Committees of the Fourth Internationalist Tendency, met at Wilder Forest, Minnesota, from September 1 to 3 in the FIT's sixth national conference. They voted overwhelmingly to approve a new perspective for the organization.

Since its founding in 1984—by individuals expelled from the Socialist Workers Party as a result of the anti-Trotskyist campaign begun by the party's leadership in 1981—the FIT has called for the reintegration into the SWP of all who were victims of the purge. We saw this as a necessary step that would allow a thorough discussion about our programmatic disagreements. Our goal was to convince the party membership that our viewpoint, a revolutionary Marxist viewpoint, was correct, as opposed to the new political line that was being developed by the party leadership. We hoped to reform the party by reversing its process of degeneration, so that the SWP

could once again become the vehicle for building a revolutionary Marxist vanguard organization in the U.S.

Earlier this year, however, the Socialist Workers Party leadership formally announced the severing of fraternal relations with the Fourth International. (See "The Socialist Workers Party Formalizes Break from the Fourth International" in *Bulletin in Defense of Marxism* No. 77.) This act, and the lack of any significant protest against it from the secondary leadership or party rank and file, combined with a number of other events that have accumulated over the past year, convinced the overwhelming majority of the FIT that there is no longer any realistic prospect for turning the SWP back into an effective vehicle for constructing the revolutionary party in this country. The Barnes faction has succeeded in decisively imposing its revisionist programmatic perspectives on the party membership; the internal atmosphere is so repressive and undemocratic that there is little likelihood for any opposition to get a fair hearing of its views.

Organizational Method of the SWP Leadership

In her report on the SWP that was approved by the conference delegates, FIT national coordinator Evelyn Sell pointed out that this victory for the Barnes faction was not gained through a process of political discussion and debate. The present party leadership made no effort to *convince* the SWP ranks of its new programmatic perspectives by defending its ideas against those who disagreed. They simply *imposed* their viewpoint by *suppressing* discussion. Individuals who tried to raise a dissent—or even ask a question—found themselves the target of slander and harassment. If they did not quit the party as a result they were expelled on trumped-up organizational charges. In this way, the Barnes faction studiously avoided all political debate about its new ideas.

Sell cited the example of Jack Barnes's report, "The Coming Revolution in South Africa" (see *New Internationalist*, Fall 1985) to

(Continued on page 26)

A Call by the Fourth Internationalist Tendency:

For the Reconstitution of a United Movement of the Fourth International in the U.S.

To our comrades in Socialist Action and in Solidarity:

The withdrawal of the Socialist Workers Party from the Fourth International, after attempting for years to disrupt it, creates a new situation for our movement in this country. Reunification of FI forces can now take place only outside of the SWP. And the need for a united organization of the Fourth International in the U.S. has never been greater:

- The collapse of Stalinism in Eastern Europe and its profound crisis in the USSR and in China raises crucial questions that the Fourth International is able to answer in a unique and effective manner.
- It is necessary to broaden and strengthen opposition to U.S. imperialism as it continues on its destructive course in Central America, the Caribbean, and South Africa, while bringing us to the brink of a major war in the Middle East.
- And here at home, in the midst of a growing economic, social, and political crisis, activists involved in the labor and anti-intervention movements, Black, Latino, women's, and other struggles, are increasing their activity and engaging in discussions about how to move forward.

Unification of the forces of the Fourth International would significantly strengthen our ability to be active in and provide leadership for these struggles. It would create a pole of attraction for experienced

political activists—including the best elements from the SWP who have become disillusioned because of that organization's crisis—and draw newly radicalizing layers toward the Trotskyist movement. This, in turn, would lay the necessary groundwork for a future mass revolutionary party in the United States.

The FIT therefore unconditionally favors a process which can lead to unity among comrades currently in our own organization, in Socialist Action, and in Solidarity, resulting in the reconstitution of a sympathizing section of our world movement in the U.S. The process we envision involves all three components of our movement in this country which are recognized in a fraternal way by the Fourth International. In this spirit we advocate and will work to bring about discussion and cooperative activities between the three existing groups.

We have had big differences over important questions such as our assessment of the Nicaraguan revolution and the FSLN, how to interpret events in Eastern Europe and the USSR, and what attitude to take toward other left currents in the U.S. or toward the majority of the Fourth International. These differences can, however, coexist within a common Leninist organization, since they are not of a principled nature; they can be resolved by the normal functioning of a healthy, fulsome, and fruitful democratic centralism which alone assures a voluntary discipline in action.

We believe that everything possible must be done to move in the direction of a unification of our forces. We commit ourselves to that end and call upon our comrades in Socialist Action and in Solidarity to join in this endeavor. We look forward to your response.

September 15, 1990

Bush Golfs as Opposition Grows to Middle East War

by Tom Barrett

The spectacle of the president of the United States playing golf at Kennebunkport, Maine, as he deploys the U.S.'s largest military force since the Vietnam war, has begun to inspire distrust among Americans and citizens of other countries who are participating in the U.S.-led intervention. In city after city antiwar activists are beginning to organize at the grassroots level, as it becomes clear that there will be no early end to this latest Mideast crisis.

A number of complex and contradictory factors are beginning to work against Bush, as a consequence of his failure to end the crisis quickly. In a display of overconfidence after his easy takeover of Panama (perhaps Saddam Hussein should have accused the emir of Kuwait of trafficking in cocaine), Bush chose a strategy of military confrontation rather than compromise. He faces an Iraqi dictator who is no "madman" but an astute bourgeois politician. Hussein might have been willing to come to an accommodation with the U.S. in the early stages of the crisis, but the American president's arrogant insistence on asserting U.S. authority in the region has made compromise much more difficult now.

After an initial rush of support from a broad spectrum of bourgeois politicians, Bush's consensus appears to be cracking in unexpected places. Patrick Buchanan, a former speechwriter for Richard Nixon and a spokesperson for the most reactionary sections of the U.S. ruling class, has taken issue with Bush's policies. Jesse Jackson, on the other hand, has supported the Mideast intervention up to now. There is a debate within the U.S. bourgeoisie over Middle East policy, and it is directly related to oil economics. The reason for Saddam Hussein's invasion—as he himself stated up front—was the relatively low price of crude oil, about \$17.00 per barrel at that time. A significant section of the capitalist class in the United States shares the view that oil prices are too low. This obviously is comprised of the petroleum barons

FIT National Conference Motion on the Movement Against U.S. Troops in the Middle East:

The following is the text of a motion adopted by the delegates to the FIT National Conference on September 1, 1990:

We will work with all our effort to build the newly developing movement in the United States for the withdrawal of all U.S. and other imperialist forces from the Middle East. The demands of the coalition must clearly focus on this question, and should not raise the slogan "Iraq Out of Kuwait!" as some elements are demanding. There are two reasons for this. First, there are different viewpoints among anti-intervention activists about the Iraqi annexation. No one should be excluded from helping to organize around the central demand of "U.S. Out Now!" More importantly, however, any call by the U.S. anti-intervention movement for the withdrawal of Iraqi forces would tend to be seen as putting qualifications on our demand for U.S. withdrawal—no matter what our intentions might be. That would create serious problems. Our demand for "U.S. Troops Out!" must be unconditional; there cannot even appear to be a quid pro quo in this case.

themselves, but it also includes bankers whose revenues depend on oil-company profits. Low oil prices are the direct cause of the economic slump in the American Southwest, which itself was the biggest factor in the savings and loan debacle. Billions of dollars have been lost throughout the economy since crude oil has been at a surplus.

Saddam Hussein's problems are fundamentally the same: because of his war with Iran, he is now facing a monumental debt burden. With crude prices at \$17.00 per barrel there was simply no way that Iraq could meet its financial obligations. Kuwait's refusal to abide by OPEC-mandated production cuts, which were designed to push prices up to \$25.00 per barrel, was the stated and real cause of the Iraqi invasion. There is sympathy for Iraq's situation among this section of the U.S. capitalist class. Bush, the former president of Zapata Oil, clearly understands this point of view, and though another section of the U.S. ruling class desires lower oil prices, this is not Bush's motivation for intervening against Iraq. His concern is to reassert U.S. dominance in the Middle East, something which was seriously weakened when the shah of Iran fell in 1979. Whichever direction oil prices are to go, Bush's policy is to make certain that that decision is made in the United States, in consultation with its imperialist partners, and not by upstart Arab or Iranian nationalists.

For that reason Bush stands behind the House of Sabah, which has ruled Kuwait for 250 years. The Sabah emir has been one of the United States most cooperative Mideast allies in the turbulent decades since the Second World War. Kuwait has provided most of Jordanian King Hussein's national budget as well as bankrolling conservative elements of the Palestine Liberation Organization. Kuwait has been generous to Egypt's Mubarak (another pro-U.S. leader) as well. If Washington is to maintain the trust of the conservative monarchies in the region Bush must stand behind his friends in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.

Bush's arrogant grab for Middle East power has caused the crisis to drag on for nearly a month at this writing. The longer it continues the more strength anti-intervention resistance gains. Weekly picket lines at federal buildings and oil company offices are taking place in many major cities. In New York different offices have been picketed weekly, drawing between 100 and 150 each time. In Minneapolis protest pickets of about 50 were held at the federal building and outside a hotel where Vice President Dan Quayle was addressing a Republican fund-raising event. A protest rally combined with a teach-in was held on August 23 in Minneapolis, drawing 150-200 people.

Similar protests are occurring in Cleveland, Philadelphia, Kansas City, and other important cities. The biggest event so far has been a demonstration of 1,000 in San Francisco on August 28. Plans are underway for a major protest meeting in New York on September 13, which will feature former attorney general Ramsey Clark, among other speakers, and a major protest march on October 20. More than 100 people met on August 28 to help organize those events. Activists in Philadelphia, the San Francisco Bay Area, Cleveland, and other cities are planning protests and teach-ins as well. The longer Bush insists on imposing his will on the peoples of the Mideast the more likely an all-out war becomes, and the stronger domestic and international resistance against his war efforts will become.

Antiwar activists are attempting to come to grips with the political complexities of the gulf crisis. Saddam Hussein is, after

(Continued on page 40)

Kuwait is an enclave established by British imperialism during the colonial era and sustained by U.S. and British imperialism in the post-World War II era. It is similar to Hong Kong, or Macao, or the Panama Canal Zone.

History of Kuwait and the Mideast

The Middle East was, for a long time, ruled by the Ottoman Empire from Istanbul. The empire began a rapid decline in the 17th century. It was attacked and challenged constantly by a rising European bourgeoisie—the French, German, and above all, the British.

In World War I the Ottoman Empire allied itself against the British, French, and Russian ruling classes. The defeat of Turkey left the British and French as supreme masters of the Middle East. They proceeded to divide up the region under the “Sykes-Picot” agreement.

France “got” Lebanon and Syria. Britain “got” Mesopotamia and Palestine, and then proceeded to set up a virtual protectorate over Arabia under King Saud.

Kuwait was part of Basra during the reign of the Turkish sultans. Basra is now in southern Iraq. In 1899, the British set up their hegemony over the emirate of Kuwait as part of their struggle against the sultanate of Turkey for control of the Persian Gulf.

Iraq became nominally independent in 1932 while Kuwait remained separate, as the British wanted it to be. They established the rule of the emir. After World War II, huge quantities of oil were found in Kuwait and that was the beginning of the game for control over oil resources. The emir, acting as agent of British and U.S. oil companies, became among the wealthiest men in the world.

To play one off against the other, British and U.S. imperialism gave nominal independence to different “states” in the Middle East—after first dividing them strategically by tribal and religious schisms. In 1961 Kuwait became inde-

Notes on Kuwaiti History and Society

by Anu Kumar Munroe

pendent, but General Kassem of Iraq threatened to annex it, and British troops were sent in. Again, Iraq made threats in 1973 and 1975 but was outmaneuvered by Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, the shah of Iran, who acted directly as the puppet of U.S. imperialism.

It is important to see the existence of these states in the Middle East—Kuwait, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, etc., as enclaves set up by imperialism to secure access to cheap oil. By creating the artificial divisions in the first place, and then forming blocs with one or another state, or group of states, imperialism manipulates the situation to advance its own interests.

The open stooges of U.S. imperialism in OPEC are: Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates. These states have blocked the effort to raise oil prices, threatening countries like Iraq and Iran with bankruptcy. The latter two countries have bourgeois nationalist regimes (with their own acute contradictions) that set them apart from the others. The 1979 revolution in Iran, though dominated by the reactionary Islamic clergy, was a popular revolution in which a national bourgeoisie—historically repressed after the defeat of the short-lived nationalist Mossadeq government (1951-53)—expressed its own aspirations and interests, as did the Iranian working class and peasantry.

While socialists should support the aspirations for unity of the Arab masses, we certainly cannot support Saddam Hussein. The Iraqi dictator is not really a significant threat to U.S. imperialism—which befriended and armed him when he

was attacking the Iranian revolution, just as it has consistently supported other hated dictators throughout the world so long as they act in a way that is consistent with Washington’s foreign policy. The only danger that imperialism need really fear in the present situation is that the overthrow of the Kuwaiti monarchy might trigger a struggle for genuine democracy, fueled by the ongoing Palestinian struggle and a revolutionary explosion across the Middle East. That would be totally counter to the interests of the reigning regimes in all of these states, of course, as well as against the interests of imperialism.

Kuwaiti Society

There is a feudal ruling class in Kuwait that consists of a series of merchant families linked by marriage. The “Al Sabah” family has one thousand members who monopolize the oil wealth. They use a portion of it to buy social peace. For example, Kuwaiti citizens have free medical care and other benefits. But only 650,000 out of two million residents in Kuwait have citizenship. Only 60,000 of these—men with a certain amount of property—can vote. In 1986, the emir dissolved the parliament, imposed press censorship, and expelled 49 dissident writers.

There are 150,000 domestic servants, 75,000 of whom are from Sri Lanka. The working class includes Egyptians, Iraqis, Jordanians, Iranians, Pakistanis, Indians, Filipinos, and Thais. The largest single group is Palestinian, with 400,000 workers, many of whom are part of the civil service. One Jordanian economist described Kuwait as “an apartheid country, with 40 percent Kuwaiti and 60 percent other Arab peoples.”

The royal family is believed to own \$50 billion invested in its personal accounts. The holdings of the Kuwaiti Investment Office are believed to be over \$100 billion and are held in London, not Kuwait! □

Breaking News on the Movement Against Bush’s Mideast War:

New York Protest Meeting at Cooper Union Draws 2,000

Overflow Crowd Attends U.C. Berkeley Teach-in

Meeting Held in New York to Discuss National Coalition

Local Protests Taking Place Across the U.S.

Coverage of these and other events—occurring after our deadline—In the next *Bulletin in Defense of Marxism*

Discussion on the Middle East

The article on the crisis in the Middle East by Tom Barrett, which appeared in our last issue, provoked a sharp disagreement from a number of this magazine's regular correspondents. In dispute is an important question—should revolutionary Marxists call for Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait? We are publishing here a piece by Dave Riehle and Samuel Adams that expresses a point of view different from Barrett's. Barrett and Steve Bloom have promised to reply in our next issue. We are anxious to get further comments.

This question is important. We believe it will be interesting and informative for our readers to consider the arguments on both sides. At the same time, however, we should understand the limits of what is in dispute. This is not a disagreement over the kind of movement that needs to be built in the United States against George Bush's intervention. The Fourth Internationalist Tendency's sixth national conference unanimously adopted a motion on September 1 (printed on p. 2) explaining why coalitions formed in this country around the Middle East crisis should limit demands to "U.S. Out Now!" and not take up the question of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. The key problem that has sparked this discussion concerns what attitude revolutionary Marxists should take toward Saddam Hussein's annexation. Is it a positive or negative development from the point of view of the international working class movement?

Iraq's Invasion of Kuwait: What Position for Revolutionary Socialists?

by Dave Riehle and Samuel Adams

We disagree with Tom Barrett's characterization of Saddam Hussein's invasion and annexation of Kuwait as "unjustifiable," and Barrett's call for Iraq to remove its troops from Kuwait ("U.S. Troops Out of the Middle East—War in the Persian Gulf"—*Bulletin in Defense of Marxism* No. 77, September 1990).

U.S. imperialism today is preparing public opinion to accept a bloody and brutal U.S. military attack against Iraq. Washington argues such action is warranted because Iraq unjustifiably invaded Kuwait and refuses to withdraw its troops from that country. It is a serious mistake for us to lend grist to that argument by joining in the condemnation of Iraq. Instead, we should focus our efforts *exclusively* on opposing U.S. aggression and intervention. Our *single and solitary* demand should be for the immediate withdrawal of all U.S. troops, ships, and planes from the Persian Gulf. The Iraqi invasion should be treated as a separate question to be settled by the Arab masses in the region.

But apart from questions involving strategy and tactics for the U.S. anti-intervention movement, we believe Barrett has missed the main point concerning the Iraqi invasion and consequently has arrived at the wrong conclusion. Barrett writes, "In a war which pits Arab against Arab the only winner will be the imperialists." This is a nonclass approach. The "war" that is already opening up in the Persian Gulf today is more and more *a war of the Arab masses against the region's reactionary ruling classes*.

The sheiks and the billionaire monarchs who rule those countries are quaking in their boots over the growing threat to their oppressive regimes. That is the dynamic unleashed by the Iraqi invasion.

Revolutionary Marxists do not regard national boundaries as sacrosanct, especially when—as here—they have been artificially imposed by outside colonial powers (see discussion of this below). While we support the right of self-determination, this is always placed within the context of advancing the proletarian cause and weakening imperialist domination. The fight for self-determination in the Persian Gulf crisis means support for the right of the Arab masses in the region to settle their own affairs free from

intervention by imperialism acting on behalf of the big oil monopolies, the bankers, and reactionary puppet regimes.

In this regard, the overthrow of the pro-imperialist Kuwaiti monarchy is an extremely positive development. And Saddam Hussein's call for the Arab masses throughout the Middle East to rise up against their rulers—a call admittedly made to serve Hussein's own interests—is also nonetheless progressive. It is stirring a profound response, resulting in huge demonstrations by oppressed Arab peoples directed not only against the puppet national regimes but also the imperialist masters of those regimes. In fact, the struggle is now widely perceived as one between an Arab leader supported by millions of workers and peasants against the U.S. imperialist colossus.

The entire political landscape in the Middle East is being redrawn as a result of the Iraqi invasion. All classes, nations, and social movements are being dramatically affected. For example, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), which has been funded by and oriented toward the corrupt and repressive Arab governments, is now debating a different course. A section of the PLO is adopting much more of a *class outlook*. This improves the prospects for building a proletarian and revolutionary Palestinian movement capable of throwing off the Zionist yoke and winning land and liberation for the Palestinian masses.

Hussein's offer to withdraw Iraqi troops from Kuwait if Israel will withdraw its troops from the occupied territories further exposes Israeli imperialism. It also helps deepen and intensify the demand that Israel give up all the conquests it seized from its unjust wars of aggression against the Arab countries. In addition, Hussein is also helping expose the Kremlin's treachery in collaborating with U.S. imperialism. The Arab masses see more clearly than before who their enemies are and they are learning from this experience to think more along class lines.

Iraq's unilateral withdrawal from Kuwait at this point, with nothing in return, would be a *setback* to that development. That is why it is so patently wrong to demand it.

A Historical Perspective

The discussion of the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait has to be placed in the context of the struggle by the Arab peoples against imperialist domination, and for self-determination, national sovereignty, and control of their national resources.

This struggle has continued uninterrupted for centuries, against the Ottoman Empire, against British and French imperialism, and especially since the end of World War II against United States imperialism and the state of Israel, which reinforces the Western imperialist countries' domination of the Arab world with its own armed forces and expansionist policies.

The struggle over control of the Arab East took on a renewed urgency with the discovery of vast oil resources early in this century, and the exploitation of these resources by the giant imperialist oil monopolies has since been the axis of imperialist policy in the Arab world.

Since the time of Lenin and the founding of the Communist International, Marxists have understood that the struggle by oppressed and semicolonial peoples for self-determination in the epoch of imperialism has an objectively progressive character. The fact that this struggle has been led in part by bourgeois nationalists, with all of the defects of their leadership and methods, does not change this. The fact that the leadership of the anti-imperialist struggle falls under the domination of bourgeois nationalists forces simply illustrates the historical immaturity of the proletarian vanguard, but does not detract from the progressive character of the struggle against imperialism.

It was a historical advance that the pro-imperialist feudal monarchies in Egypt, Iraq, and Libya were overthrown in the 1950s and '60s. Their replacement by bourgeois nationalist regimes represented an advance in the struggle by the colonial Arab masses for self-determination, and was in part a result of, and in part a stimulation for, a powerful upsurge of the Arab masses at that time. It was also an objective advance that the artificial, comprador regime of the Kuwaiti oil sheiks has been abolished. It is possible to recognize this without giving any political support to the bourgeois regime of Saddam Hussein, just as it was necessary to support the nationalization of the U.S. oil companies in Mexico by the Cárdenas regime in the 1930s without giving support to the bourgeois government he headed.

Marxists cannot give first place in their assessment of a social conflict between imperialism and semicolonial countries oppressed and exploited by imperialism to considerations based on territorial factors, or the question of who fired the first shot. And we cannot base our position on what we think an Iraqi workers' government might have done under the same circumstances.

A key element in the assessment of this situation has to be the reaction of the Arab masses. Where they are most free to express themselves, in occupied Palestine and Jordan, the reaction has been to galvanize and renew the Palestinian struggle. We also have reports from Syria that demonstrators supporting Iraq were shot down by the army. This is further proof that the Iraqi occupation cannot be separated from the overall struggle by the Arab peoples for control over their own land. We cannot put the precondition on our support that this struggle must be carried out only by proletarian internationalists, with revolutionary methods. Yet this

is what "calling upon Iraq to remove its troops from Kuwait" amounts to. It does no good to write pages on the historic right of the Arab people to self-determination in the abstract and then refuse to support an actual advance in this process because it is carried out by unclean hands. To call for "Iraqi withdrawal" turns all our other words into empty phrases, and undermines any consistent opposition to U.S. military moves. The United States is also demanding "Iraqi withdrawal and restoration of Kuwaiti sovereignty"—which means, in real life, restoration of the sovereignty exercised by the oil monopolies.

Barrett's argument for "the restoration of Kuwaiti sovereignty" places the arbitrary and artificial national boundaries of the Arab world, all of which were drawn by imperialism with no consultation with the Arab peoples, in *conflict* with self-determination. The boundaries were invented by imperialism to *stymie* self-determination, as well as to demarcate the spheres of influence of the different imperialist countries in the Middle East. Kuwait, in particular, was made an independent kingdom by British imperialism only in 1961, in response to the upsurge by the Arab masses in the early sixties, and in particular in response to the overthrow of King Faisal of Iraq in 1958, and the refusal of the new revolutionary government to recognize the British "protectorate" of Kuwait established in 1899. British troops were landed in Kuwait in 1961 to enforce their continued domination.

It makes no more sense to hold the principle of "sovereignty" of imperialist enclaves carved out specifically to prevent self-determination above the struggle itself in the Arab East than it does to uphold the right of the Loyalist population in Northern Ireland to exercise veto power over the unification of Ireland, another case where the divide-and-rule tactics of British imperialism were and are applied.

Strikes, sweeping land reforms, wholesale nationalizations, civil war, revolutionary uprisings, and imperialist troop landings have marked the history of the Arab revolution in the imperialist epoch since the First World War. Unfortunately, the leadership of these struggles has not been in the hands of revolutionary socialists, and the Arab masses have paid a high price for this. But the question of leadership can only be resolved in the process of the struggle against imperialism. The intervention of the Arab masses in this process is again being renewed in response to the military bureaucratic intervention in Kuwait by the Iraqi regime, and in that sense is testimony to its objectively progressive nature. Barrett's call for everybody to shake hands and go back to their original positions is, at best, unrealistic, and can provide no adequate guide for action for revolutionaries either here or in the Middle East. In the long run, it is untenable to advocate that the U.S. anti-intervention movement call only for U.S. withdrawal and at the same time hold the position that Iraq should withdraw from Kuwait, which is the objective of U.S. intervention.

It is regrettable that this blow against imperialism was delivered by the reactionary military-bureaucratic Saddam Hussein regime, and not directly by the revolutionary Arab masses, in their own name, and with their own forces. But, as Trotsky once said, the "excesses" of the revolutionary struggle flow from the "excesses" of history. □

September 8, 1990

Imperialist troops out of the Gulf!

THE warmongers in Washington, London, Paris and elsewhere are attempting to outbid each other every day in making the most sinister and bloodthirsty threats. It had seemed that the days when a John Foster Dulles could suggest the use of nuclear weapons in Vietnam were over. In fact, nothing could be further from the truth. The current debacle of Stalinism, paralyzing to a large extent the deterrent force of the USSR, gives a free hand to the audacity of US imperialism and its partners.

Parallel to this, what is at stake is the reorganization of the imperialist military system, the future of NATO and of an eventual integrated and autonomous European "defence". The United States wishes to illustrate its point of view in this debate.

Nothing can justify the complicity with imperialism shown in this conflict by the bureaucrats in Moscow and Beijing. Whatever the limits established by the "international legality" under whose banner the imperialist forces of intervention are parading while it is at their disposition, it can escape nobody that this concentration of US troops, with their impressive panoply of the latest destructive technology of the electronic warfare era, is being deployed for offensive purposes.

The imperialist hawks do not hide their true objective, which cannot be accommodated through compromise solutions — the crushing of Iraqi military power.

US seeks to reimpose hegemony

Their motivations are several. Imperialism is demonstrating, for the benefit of the entire world, that it will not tolerate the growth of regional powers with ambitions contradictory to imperialist interests. Practices which the great powers casually permit everyday — occupation, annexation, violation of United Nations resolutions — are strictly forbidden to those who are not members of their club. At a time when US imperialism feels itself more than ever master of the world, it wishes to make its military hegemony felt in the most brutal and peremptory manner.

It is doing so with all the more enthusiasm in the current conflict, where it is intervening to protect its privileged clients, the oil sheikhs of the Gulf, monarchies whose existence and maintenance is dependent on world

THE ONGOING
deployment of imperialist forces in the region of the Arab-Persian Gulf has already reached a level unequalled since the war of aggression in Indochina.

This formidable multi-imperialist war machine is preparing to go beyond the stage of blockade to that of direct aggression against Iraq.

Statement of the United Secretariat Bureau of the Fourth International
September 6, 1990

imperialism.

The billions of dollars of oil revenues pocketed by these regimes, the most corrupt and anachronistic on the planet, are diverted from the immense needs of the Arab populations, of whom the great majority are sunk, like the rest of the Third World, in poverty and distress.

In the most scandalous and revolting manner, these billions are deposited or invested in the imperialist economies. They are, at the same time, put outside the reach of all subversion in the oil producing regions. At a time when world capitalism faces the beginning of a new recession, these sources of capital are all the more precious to it. The conflict taking place has moreover come at an ideal time to furnish an easy explanation for the imperialists and for all their clients concerning the developing economic crisis.

Once more, the oil exporters, the Arabs in particular, are designated as the source of evil in public opinion. This makes it possible to hide the fact that the tendency towards recession was present before the new Gulf crisis and that the "new oil shock" is considerably exaggerated, given the relatively modest recent increases, up until now, in the price of oil. This effort to intoxicate the masses, on the basis of warmongering and dramatic speeches evoking the war against Hitler, provides the justification both for the austerity measures implemented at their expense and the exception made for the military budgets.

The crowning irony of the affair is that the regime of Saddam Hussein has survived largely thanks to those who portray it today as a new Hitler and who, only yesterday, treated it as an ally.

The ferocious dictatorship in power in Iraq was encouraged by the imperialists in its insane war against Iran. It is only because of the support of the imperialists, France in particular, the USSR and the Gulf oil sheikhs that Iraq was able to resist the Iranian counter-offensive from 1982 onwards, and come out of the war with an unscathed dictatorship and a disproportionately powerful army. Where were those who today deploy their troops for the Emir of Kuwait when the Kurdish people of Iraq suffered a war of extermination waged with poison gas by Saddam Hussein?

The Arab workers and those of the entire world have nothing to gain from a war between the executioner of Baghdad and the potentate of Kuwait, supported by the Saudi monarch, and the Arab regimes in the pay of the latter two and imperialism — such as the Egyptian regime, currently being rewarded with largesse for its complicity. They must refuse to serve as cannon fodder in such a war, either for the ambitions of Saddam Hussein or for the interests of his adversaries.

But in sharp contrast to this, in the face of the imperialist intervention, the workers of the region and of the world cannot remain neutral.

Resolute fight needed

Their interest is to fight resolutely for the withdrawal of the imperialist troops, in order to prevent a carnage whose price the entire people of the world will pay under one form or another. In the case of confrontation, they must fight for the defeat of imperialism, to dissuade it from pursuing its policy of aggression against the peoples of the third world.

Revolutionaries must mobilize urgently and energetically for:

- the immediate withdrawal of the imperialist forces from the Gulf region;

- the ending of the blockade imposed on Iraq and the release of its overseas assets;

- opposition to all costs of military intervention, immediate annulment of arms expenditure and of austerity measures imposed on the masses. ★

U.S. Unions Seek Legislative Ban on Scabs

by Richard Scully

"There is currently no right to strike in this country." This statement by Rep. William L. Clay, a Black Democratic congressman who heads up the House Labor-Management Subcommittee, was made at a hearing to consider a labor inspired bill to ban the hiring of "permanent replacements" during a strike. Labor leaders contend that if employers can legally replace strikers with scabs, the right to strike no longer exists.

During the past ten years, U.S. labor leaders have responded weakly to the government-employer attack against the union movement. When Reagan broke the air traffic controllers' strike in 1981, the labor officialdom denounced it but did little else. Painful defeats were also inflicted on workers and their unions when employers used scabs to break strikes at Phelps-Dodge, TWA, Boise Cascade, International Paper, Brown & Sharpe, Danly Machine, A.T. Massey, the *Chicago Tribune*, Magic Chef, and Continental Airlines. But aside from their usual pronouncements about the need for solidarity, occasional appearances at picket lines and rallies, and routine condemnations of companies' strikebreaking, the labor officialdom has passively tolerated the destruction of unions.

Today the situation cries out for mass picketing and the mass mobilization of workers in support of striking Eastern Airlines and Greyhound workers. But the call has yet to be sounded from the top for such actions.

The U.S. labor movement is in deep crisis. Concession bargaining combined with rising inflation has eroded workers' living standards. Job combinations and intensified speedup continue to spread throughout industry. The "team concept" and "quality of work life" programs are increasingly being utilized by companies to undermine unions and increase production and profits. Plants continue to shut down and move to cheap labor areas, leaving shattered lives and ghost towns behind. Organizing is on the wane, with only 12 percent of the nonagricultural private workforce unionized. Based on current trends, the figure will decline to 5 percent by the end of the century.

The 1985-86 strike by United Food & Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local P9 against Hormel sparked a fight-back spirit among significant numbers of workers. The fact that 3,000 local unions extended aid to P9 demonstrated the pent-up feeling of anger and bitterness against the employers' assaults and a determination to do something about it. Unfortunately, the strike was broken through a combined effort by the company, the repressive apparatus of the state, and the UFCW international leadership.

However, in the intervening years—as the percentage of organized workers continued to decline and as labor's clout was further reduced—the U.S. union leadership recognized the need to take some kind of action. They decided to seek a federal law prohibiting the hiring of scab workers. AFL-CIO president Lane Kirkland has vowed to wage a campaign in support of this measure that will "raise the issue in every forum that we can find."

Legislative and Legal History

In 1935, Congress enacted the National Labor Relations Act, which supposedly protected labor's basic rights to organize and to strike. But three years later, the U.S. Supreme Court in *NLRB vs. Mackay Radio & Telegraph Co.* handed down a decision allowing employers to permanently replace workers during a strike.

There are two kinds of primary strikes: unfair labor practice strikes and economic strikes.¹ An unfair labor practice strike is one called to protest an employer's violation of workers' legal rights: for example, firing workers for union activities, employer threats, coercion, interrogation, refusal to bargain, etc. Workers who engage in an unfair labor practice strike and then offer to return to work unconditionally must be reinstated under current law, even if the employer has filled their jobs with scabs.

Economic strikers are *not* entitled by law to get their jobs back if they have been "permanently replaced" during the strike. They lose their seniority rights. The best they can hope for is to be placed on a preferential hiring list so that they are first in line for a job when openings develop. (Of course, if they win their strike, they can negotiate their reinstatement.)

Although the demand for legislation to protect the rights of economic strikers is only being pushed now for the first time, the problem has been around for a while. It's just that the practice of replacing strikers was far less common in previous decades. It was used against the textile workers, who attempted unsuccessfully to organize the South after World War II. But until the 1980s that was more the exception than the rule. Now employers are on an unprecedented union-busting drive. Since 1985, employers have permanently replaced workers in one of every four strikes, and the number is growing.

Labor's legal rights regarding strikes have been sharply curtailed since the end of World War II. The Taft-Hartley Act, called the "Slave Labor Act" by labor, was passed in 1947. It prohibits unions from engaging in secondary activity designed to halt the operations of a business that is handling struck goods. It also proscribes unions from negotiating clauses in collective bargaining agreements that allow their members to refuse to process or sell struck goods.

Strikers have also lost the right to food stamps and unemployment compensation. Returning strikers can lose their seniority rights to less senior employees who crossed picket lines and went to work during a strike.

A Supreme Court decision allows companies to lock out workers when a contract expires and a new one has not been ratified. All the company has to show is that it has bargained to "impasse" and that the union has rejected its "final offer." Then the company can replace the existing workforce and employ newly hired workers at the lower wages and reduced benefits contained in the company's last offer.

But that is not all. One year after the hiring of these replacements—assuming no new collective bargaining agreement has been signed—the replacements can vote the union out in a decertification election.

Restrictions on Mass Picketing

Scab-herding to break strikes is as old as the labor movement itself. Workers historically have found ways to defend their jobs and deal with scabs. They have utilized a variety of means,

Other Countries Have Fairer Laws

In allowing companies to hire permanent replacements during lawful strikes, American labor law is out of step with most of the world.

In Belgium an employer cannot dismiss workers for striking whether or not the strike is called or approved by the labor union.

French law is one of the strongest. It does not allow the firing of workers during or because of a strike. The French labor code not only forbids the use of temporary replacements during a strike, it also forbids an employer from using temporary workers hired before a strike as replacements for permanent employees.

The right to strike in Greece is guaranteed by the constitution of 1975, and a 1982 Greek law says:

"During a legal strike, the hiring of strikebreakers is prohibited."

In Italy the strike is legally recognized under the constitution, and employers cannot dismiss strikers or permanently hire other workers to replace them.

Under Japanese law, it's unlawful for an employer to discharge a striking employee.

In Germany the dismissal of striking workers is not specifically outlawed by statute, but such practices are considered illegal.

The Quebec Labor Code expressly prohibits employers from hiring replacement workers during a lawful strike. Ontario's labor law gives striking workers a guarantee of reinstatement for a period of six months from the beginning of a lawful strike.

Even British labor law, while not as strongly pro-worker as other European countries, is better than American labor law.

(From UAW Ammo, Vol. 27, No. 1, June 1990)

the most effective of which has been mass picket lines at the struck workplace.

But the legal right to engage in mass picketing—won in the 1930s—was demolished by Taft-Hartley, which gave judges the formal power to prohibit it. The union is permitted symbolic picketing, nothing more.

Violating an injunction can result in the most severe penalties. Cops, sheriff's deputies, and even the national guard—augmented by company security forces—descend in large numbers to enforce the court's order. This means protecting the scabs' "right to work" and physically beating back and jailing those who interfere with that "right." Judges are also empowered to punish offenders by levying fines, both against unions and individual workers. (Sixty-four million dollars in fines against the United Mine Workers of America has yet to be rescinded, months after the conclusion of the union's strike against the Pittston Coal Corporation.)

The labor movement has a rich history of overcoming all obstacles to conducting a successful strike. The 1934 strike battles of the truck drivers in Minneapolis, the autoworkers in Toledo, and the maritime and longshore workers on the West Coast are cases in point. In those three situations, workers were subjected to physical attacks by police and other law enforcement agencies, but were able to win strikes by virtue of mass picketing and mobilizations—all in defiance of injunctions.

Limits and Opportunities of Legislative Solution

Union leaders today do not call for a return to the tactics of the '30s. Their forum instead is the congressional hearing room and their objective is legislative relief. The question is whether this approach provides an opening which ought to be utilized by militant and class conscious trade unionists to build a mass movement in support of labor's basic right to strike.

In responding to this question, it must be kept in mind that even if strong anti-scab legislation were adopted—an unlikely prospect to say the least in view of the bipartisan

Democratic/Republican control of Congress, the inevitable veto by Bush, and the absence of an independent labor party that would give workers some kind of political voice in this country—the legislation would be no panacea. The Supreme Court would likely declare it unconstitutional as an abridgment of employers' rights to hire whom they want when they want. But even if that hurdle were also overcome, the law would be administered and interpreted by the capitalist state: the anti-union National Labor Relations Board, other governmental agencies, bankruptcy courts, etc. And, of course, if all else failed, capitalists could simply shut down struck facilities and reopen them under "new management," or move them elsewhere.

None of this, however, means that class-conscious militants should boycott the legislative struggle around the question of scabs. After all, the 40-hour workweek and the minimum wage law were products of legislative struggles and, while each has its limitations, it was correct for the labor movement, and radicals within it, to support them. Through such struggles within the "normal channels" of the capitalist system, workers can experience, firsthand, the limitations of these institutions. A class-struggle approach to winning such legislation is completely different from that of the AFL-CIO officialdom.

The AFL-CIO Launches Its Effort

The AFL-CIO Industrial Union Department (IUD) is currently spearheading the campaign for anti-scab legislation. It is focusing on winning adoption of a bill in the Senate (S.2112) introduced by Howard Metzenbaum, Democrat from Ohio, and one before the House of Representatives (H.R. 3936) sponsored by Representative William Clay, the congressman from Missouri quoted earlier. The Senate bill has six current co-sponsors and the House version 97. The IUD is attempting to organize a citizens' committee far broader than the labor movement itself to push for the legislation.

All sections of the labor movement are rallying to support this effort. Lane Kirkland has said, "This issue is at the heart of the problem of labor law in this country. Court decisions have effectively contradicted the right to strike, which is elemental to the existence of freedom of association and action in this country."

William McCarthy, president of the Teamsters, says his union is withholding campaign contributions from any member of Congress who does not support the legislation. William Bywater, president of the Electronic Workers (IUE), and Richard Trumka, president of the United Mineworkers of America, have taken the same position.

The president of the Aluminum, Brick and Glass Workers Union, Ernie LaBaff, has called for a national strike and a march on Washington on the day the Metzenbaum/Clay bill is voted in Congress.

Metzenbaum, in urging support for his legislation, points out that while the number of strikes staged by seven major unions fell by half from 1980 to 1987, the number of strikes in which permanent replacements were hired increased by 300 percent during the same time period.

Congressional hearings opened in June in both the House and the Senate. Two hundred trade unionists crammed into the largest hearing room in the Rayburn Building. Edward Strait, president of the Amalgamated Council of Greyhound Locals of the Amalgamated Transit Union cited the Greyhound strike as proof of the need for anti-strikebreaker legislation. Other union leaders, including representatives from the Teamsters and the United Food and Commercial Workers, made similar statements.

United Steel Workers of America president Lynn Williams told the House committee that, in his native Canada, the province of Quebec strictly outlaws the use of scabs. Testifying before the Senate subcommittee on the measure were Thomas Donahue, secretary-treasurer of the AFL-CIO; Owen Bieber, president of the UAW; and Henry Duffy, president of the Air Lines Pilot Association. Bieber told of an experience at Arvin Industries in North Vernon, Indiana, where the company demanded massive concessions, including the elimination of incentive pay and COLA, cuts in insurance benefits, and a drastic wage reduction—from \$11.50-\$12.00 per hour to \$5.00 per hour. At the same time, the company was making those demands, it recorded after-tax profits of \$18 million.

The workers voted to strike and the company hired scabs. After four months on the picket lines, the UAW agreed to the concessions. But even though agreement was reached on all economic issues, the company refused to permit the strikers to return to work and displace the scabs.

A Class-Struggle Program for Dealing with the Scabs

The starting point for the labor movement in coping with the problem of strikebreaking is to clean its own house. One of the worst, though least publicized, aspects of this situation is the fact that unions routinely cross each other's picket lines. During the air traffic controllers' strike, the airline unions—pilots, machinists, and flight attendants—refused to respect the strikers' picket lines. Today pilots and flight attendants are crossing machinists' picket lines at Eastern Airlines.

Legal reasons (such as no-strike clauses in collective bargaining agreements) are generally given as the rationale for such actions. But there is no justification for the practice and it must be ended at once. The AFL-CIO, which has a no-raiding clause in its constitution, should add a no-scabbing clause. And it should back it up with strong enforcement provisions.

A comprehensive educational program is also needed within the labor movement to explain that picket lines are *not* to be crossed. Solidarity campaigns to bolster support for striking workers can help reduce the practice of organized workers scabbing on each other.

But that is not enough. Impoverished workers who may be driven to strikebreaking out of sheer desperation must be won over by an all-out fight to win jobs for all, full unemployment benefits at union wages, national health insurance for every citizen of the United States, and other measures of concern to working people. A strong campaign is needed by unions to organize the unorganized—that is, to win higher wages and benefits for workers who presently do not belong to unions—as well as to organize the unemployed, opening union facilities to them and integrating them into their struggles. If all this were done, jobless workers would have a strong motivation to ally themselves with unions in their fight with individual bosses, rather than to cross strikers' picket lines.

Labor must likewise work to win the loyalty, sympathy, and support of other sectors of the population, so that the idea of scabbing never occurs to them. This can only happen if the labor movement much more vigorously participates in social struggles around the rights of the homeless, oppressed nationalities, women, family farmers, senior citizens, youth, gays and lesbians, and others.

Second, any serious program designed to cope with scabs and strikebreaking must zero in on the workplace. Picket lines must be beefed up and made massive to prevent scabs from entering. The way to deal with police interference is through an effective outpouring by supporters of the strike. The labor movement has the muscle, at least in some cases, to keep struck facilities from operating by involving overwhelming numbers from its own ranks, joined by allies and supporters.

Were labor to adopt this method of struggle, we can be certain that, in addition to police attempts to overcome mass picketing through mass arrests, the courts would tie up union treasuries through exorbitant fines and make them hostage for securing acquiescence to strikebreaking. But to win means to sacrifice; sometimes to sacrifice heavily. And a union movement that is working to gain broad public sympathy through the kinds of measures discussed above can go a long way toward limiting the repressive actions of the state by rallying popular support for its strike efforts.

The Mineworkers' strike at Pittston was an important turn in the direction of more militant strike tactics. The most dramatic experience of the strike occurred when the workers occupied a mine. Solidarity actions included strikes by 47,000 miners in seven states and substantial support by other unions. UMW tactics included civil disobedience and other violations of law. The union never allowed the huge fines it incurred from such tactics to break its will or spirit in pursuing the struggle to a successful conclusion, and that was decisive.

In my article, "What Can Be Done About the Scabs?" (*Bulletin in Defense of Marxism*, No. 55, September 1988), I

advocated a similar program. The article closed with this section on "Getting the Laws Changed":

The key to labor's success on the strike front—as well as legislatively and politically—lies in building broad coalitions with its allies around a program that meets the needs of the great majority. The more this is done independently—i.e., without relying on the "friendly" politicians of the Democratic Party who time after time order the national guard or the police to break our strikes—the more effective it will be.

Ultimately, the laws that protect scabs and punish strikers must be wiped off the books. When we in the labor movement start to elect people to political office from our own ranks—instead of electing business people and well-heeled lawyers—we can more realistically talk about getting this done.

U.S. labor leaders say it can be done now with an all-out campaign. Very well, let's put it to the test. The campaign should be waged and it should have the total support of left forces in the labor movement. A legislative ban on the hiring of scabs during a strike is a completely appropriate and timely demand, and there is every reason to give it priority emphasis. The fact that the top leadership of the union movement is pressing the demand is a positive development because that makes it easier to bring it to the ranks. This opens the door to building a unified effort in its support.

While the legislative demand by itself is inadequate, the fight for the anti-scab measure provides an opportunity for deepening the discussion on the nature of labor's crisis and what will be necessary to overcome it.

For this past decade individual unions have been engaged in separate—sometimes isolated—strike struggles. What has long been needed is a *national campaign* that unites the labor movement and its allies around the demand for national protection of the right to strike.

There are local measures that can be built on. For example, on July 25 of this year the Boston City Council by a 12-0 vote overrode a veto by the mayor and approved an ordinance declaring, "It shall be unlawful in the city of Boston for any employer willingly and knowingly to employ any strikebreaker to replace employees who are either on strike against or locked out by such an employer." The council set a fine of \$200 per day, per scab, for any violation.

Similar ordinances are on the books in New York City, Cleveland, and other municipalities.² A fight to get such ordinances adopted in cities that don't have them can be a valuable buildup in the fight for national legislation.

Finally, the pledge made by major unions not to give a dime to any politician who does not support anti-strikebreaker legislation adds an important political dimension to the developing battle. A campaign for an anti-scab law can help expose the Democratic Party as a party of big business. The Democrats control both houses of Congress. They can enact anti-scab

BIZARRO/By Piraro



legislation but won't even consider doing so unless compelled to by a massive struggle going far beyond anything the labor movement has mounted to date.

Rank-and-File Action Needed

Discussion within the labor movement is needed to determine how the fight for anti-scab legislation can be won. In such a discussion the effectiveness of mass action can be counterposed to the limitations of individual letter writing and post card campaigns, which the labor officialdom is currently pushing.

In September 1981, the AFL-CIO's call for a Solidarity Day demonstration brought a half-million people into the streets of Washington, D.C. We need an even larger action now with the central demand being to stop the strikebreaking. Local marches and rallies could help build toward the national action.

A mass action strategy will have to come from the bottom up, since the labor bureaucracy will not initiate it on its own. Obviously, this is a time when initiatives by local union activists are needed. Resolutions calling for unity in support of anti-scab legislation are timely and should spur discussion and action.

The U.S. labor movement today is at a crossroads. While polls show more favorable attitudes toward unions—for example, 65 percent of the public opposes replacement workers taking strikers' jobs—that alone will not reverse labor's sagging fortune. If it cannot exercise effectively its most effective weapon—the strike—labor will continue its downhill slide.

Looming in the background is the certainty of a major economic crisis that will cost millions of people their jobs. When that happens, the problem of "permanent striker replacements" could become infinitely worse.

Labor must act now before it is too late. It is not overstating the seriousness of the situation to say that the organized union movement in the United States is now fighting for its very survival. The only way out of labor's crisis is through mobilizing the ranks for militant struggle. Such mobilizations are the only effective means for combatting the corporations' strikebreaking offensive and restoring some of the rights taken from workers and their unions over the past several years. □

Notes

1. Primary strikes, as distinguished from secondary or sympathy strikes, are those conducted by workers around direct disputes they have with their own employers.

2. The courts have ruled that municipal and state laws barring the hiring of scabs during a strike are preempted by the Commerce Clause of the U.S. Constitution. This means that if the federal government passes legislation in an area, state and municipal governments are forbidden from doing so. The courts may also hold that such ordinances and laws violate the U.S. Constitution's Privileges and Immunities Clause, as well as the Equal Protection and Due Process Clauses of the Fourteenth Amendment. In other words, under the "free enterprise" system, the boss is free to hire whomever he wants.

The crisis confronting the savings and loan industry has been called the U.S.'s domestic Vietnam. The cost of resolving it has assumed proportions so astronomical that it defies the setting of a dollar amount. At an early point the figure of \$50 billion was thrown out; then \$150 billion; still later \$500 billion; and now \$1 trillion. Even that may not be enough.

The federal government has committed itself to meeting the obligations of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation to every depositor in the failed S&Ls. Certainly those who entrusted their life savings to these banks should not be made to suffer for the corruption and incompetence of the banking executives. But the way that this bailout is being implemented means, in fact, that the federal government is simply subsidizing the outright theft and gross negligence that still pervade the banking industry. And those that have committed these criminal acts get away with a mere slap on the wrist instead of the long prison terms they deserve.

And the crisis is not confined to the savings and loan institutions. Last year, 206 commercial banks closed down—the result of “bad loans” to oil interests, real estate developers, farmers, and third world countries. The government will have to pay out \$6 billion to cover the obligations of these banks. And that’s just the tip of the iceberg. With real estate speculators facing even greater losses, and a recession looming, many more commercial banks could be closed down.

Growing Crisis of Capitalist Credibility

There is a growing revulsion to this whole mess on the part of working people, and especially of the millions living in poverty in the U.S. There is supposedly no money available to deal with their needs—jobs, health care for all, decent housing, cleaning up the environment, rebuilding the infrastructure, improving the quality of education, adequate social security, etc. All of these face budget cuts, while the S&L bailout becomes the third “sacred cow” of the budget—the other two being the Pentagon and the interest on the national debt.

Spend less for social and human needs, more to help the already rich and powerful. This basic dynamic of the capitalist system is coming into sharper and sharper focus, raising

profound questions among the population as a whole. The U.S. has been teetering on the brink of a major social crisis for some time. The S&L fiasco could just be the factor that pushes it over the edge.

The two-party system is increasingly losing all credibility. It is now estimated that two-thirds of the U.S. population eligible to vote will not be casting ballots this fall. Democrats and Republicans blame each other for the S&L situation, but there is mounting evidence that masses of people correctly blame all the politicians, along with the greed and corruption fostered by the system in general.

Nationalize the Banks

Working people in the U.S. should begin to demand, in a loud voice, that if the government is going to pay the cost for the banking fiasco with our tax dollars, then the banks themselves should be nationalized. That way, new revenues generated by the revived banking institutions can begin to help pay for the cost of the bailout, as well as for an increase in spending on social needs.

Why should these institutions be turned back to the same kind of ownership that created the problem that all of us are now paying for—with its sole interest in the production of private profit for a tiny handful?

The S&L bailout also demonstrates, once again, the consequences of the inequitable tax structure in the U.S. Those who are bearing the biggest burden are, as usual, those least able to afford it. A surcharge on the taxes of the wealthiest Americans sufficient to raise all necessary funds is the only fair approach to this problem.

These two planks should be part of any political platform to serve the interests of U.S. working people in the 1990s. Yet we can be sure that they will be absent from the campaigns of the Democrats and Republicans—who are simply in business to ensure private profit for the rich, not the needs of the working class. This underlines, once again, the necessity for a real political alternative in this country—a labor party based on the U.S. union movement—which could raise a different kind of program for action by the U.S. government in the S&L crisis, and in every other area that affects working people in this country. □

Savings and Loan Bailout

Welfare for the Rich and Corrupt

by Richard Scully

Amnesty Campaign Organized for U.S. Political Prisoners

by Lloyd D'Aguiar

The United States government has, over the years, for its own cynical reasons, waged a furious campaign to expose the plight of political prisoners in Soviet bloc countries. With the advent of Mikhail Gorbachev and glasnost, numerous political prisoners have been freed in the Soviet Union and elsewhere in Eastern Europe. Predictably, the U.S. is crediting its aggressive stance for this success. In the meantime, however, no one has been scrutinizing the treatment of political dissidents in the U.S.

When former UN ambassador Andrew Young declared, in 1978, that the United States had political prisoners he was roundly condemned for daring to make such a remark. The official response of the United States was that it holds no political prisoners in its jails, only criminals.

This is all nonsense, says Freedom Now, an organization formed in 1988 to campaign for amnesty and human rights for political prisoners in the United States. Freedom Now claims that there are at least 100 political prisoners languishing in U.S. prisons.

A political prisoner is defined by Freedom Now as "the man or woman who is imprisoned, either awaiting trial, serving sentence, or in any other status, who is incarcerated by reason of acts, associations or beliefs in favor of self-determination for nationally oppressed peoples, against U.S. military and foreign policy, or domestic policies of the United States. . . . Our definition encompasses those who have taken actions, either symbolic or tactical, which violate laws of the United States in the pursuit of their political goals."

Freedom Now has adopted the cases of 97 prisoners who it says are being persecuted by the United States for the reasons cited above. Thirty-eight of these are African American; 3 are Native American; 22 are Puerto Rican; 24 are white North American; the remainder are from Ireland, Italy, Japan, and the Virgin Islands; 25 percent are women.

Among the African American prisoners there are eight who have been in prison for almost two decades or more: Sundiata Acoli (1973), Herman Bell (1973), Richard Mafundi Lake (total of 19 years), Mondo Langa (1970), Geronimo Pratt (1971), Albert Nuh Washington (1971), Jalil Abdul Muntaquin (1971). Hugo Pinell has been in for 25 years, since 1964.

Many of these prisoners are former members of the Black Panther Party (Geronimo Pratt, Jalil Abdul Muntaquin, Herman Bell, etc.). It is now known that the Black Panther Party was a target during the 1970s of the FBI's 20-year Counterintelligence Program (COINTELPRO). Some were charged and sentenced for committing bank robberies while others were sentenced for being involved in shootouts with the police. In 1973, Sundiata Acoli, for example, was involved along with Assata Shakur (Joanne Chesimard) and Zayd Malik Shakur in a shootout with New Jersey State troopers on the N.J. Turnpike. Zayd Malik Shakur was killed during the incident and Assata Shakur subsequently escaped from prison and now resides in Cuba, where she was granted political asylum. Authors Ward Churchill and Jim Vander Wall have

documented, in a recently published book, *Agents of Repression, The FBI's Secret War Against the Black Panther Party and the American Indian Movement*, that the FBI, then headed by J. Edgar Hoover, regarded the Panthers as the "most dangerous extremist group in the United States." With the knowledge of the upper echelons of government it carried out a program of creating "dissension" within the Panthers in an attempt to "cripple" its activities. These methods included infiltrations, frame-ups, provocations, and assassinations.

Fred Hampton, deputy chairman of the Panthers, was killed by Chicago police in 1969 as the result of an FBI assassination plot. In a civil suit brought by Hampton's relatives and Black Panther plaintiffs, it was revealed in court that an FBI informant played a key role in precipitating the police attack on the household where Hampton and comrades slept that fateful night. The presiding judge ruled that there was a government conspiracy to deny Hampton and Clark (another Panther killed in the shooting) their civil rights. Sanctions were imposed on the FBI for its cover-up activities, and an award of \$1.85 million went to the survivors and families of the deceased.

Another celebrated example of COINTELPRO tactics of "neutralizing" Black militants is the case of Dhoruba Bin-Wahad, formerly known as Richard Moore. Bin-Wahad served 19 years in prison for allegedly attempting to murder two New York City policemen in 1971. He was finally released on March 22, 1990, when the judge was persuaded, based upon 300,000 pages of documents chronicling the COINTELPRO campaign against Bin-Wahad and the Black Panthers, that the prosecution had failed to disclose important evidence favorable to Wahad when he was on trial.

It is these and other lesser known cases involving similar government tactics in dealing with its radical opponents that have prompted the founders of Freedom Now to bring worldwide attention to the fact that these individuals are not criminals, as the government contends, but political prisoners, and in some cases Prisoners of War (POWs).

The long list includes other activists such as Leonard Peltier of the American Indian Movement (AIM), whose release has been called for by scores of religious leaders, including Archbishop Desmond Tutu.

There are at least 15 Puerto Rican men and women serving lengthy sentences—some as long as life—for seditious conspiracy and related charges arising out of their struggle for the independence of Puerto Rico. These prisoners are considered POWs by Freedom Now.

Among the white North American prisoners there is the startling case of Susan Rosenberg, an activist in the anti-Vietnam war and radical women's movements, who was sentenced to 58 years for possession of weapons and explosives. Timothy Blunk, who was arrested along with Rosenberg, was also sentenced to 58 years in

prison. These sentences are the longest ever given for a conviction on this charge.

Also receiving international attention is the case of Silvia Baraldini, an Italian citizen who was accused of assisting in the escape of Assata Shakur. Baraldini was convicted for refusing to cooperate with a grand jury investigating the Puerto Rican independence movement, and for participating in a bank robbery which is said to have never been committed. She is serving 43 years.

In an attempt to counter the contention of the U.S. government that there are no political prisoners here, and that this is a problem only in other countries, Freedom Now decided to first try to expose the myth in the international community. Since its formation in 1988 the organization has been involved in several interventions at sessions of the UN Commission on Human Rights, in Geneva, Switzerland.

One early problem encountered in presenting the case on behalf of these political prisoners was the question of a perception among foreign countries that "democracy" exists in the U.S., that the Constitution guarantees basic political rights, etc. Thus there was difficulty in understanding how there could be political prisoners under such conditions.

This caused a shift in strategy. Rather than dealing directly with the question of political prisoners, it was decided to intervene on the question of the U.S. record of complying with the UN's 1965 "International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination." There is less resistance in the international community to the idea of racial discrimination existing in the United States.

By approaching the matter in this way, says Roger Wareham, who made the intervention at the 46th session of the UN Commission on Human Rights in February 1990, as a representative of the International Association Against Torture (IAAT), it is possible to raise the question of other categories of political prisoners such as Native Americans, Puerto Ricans, and white North Americans, who also run afoul of U.S. laws while struggling against racial and national oppression.

In his February presentation before the commission, Wareham documented the "third world" status occupied by African Americans by comparing their situation in housing, health, education, criminal justice, and income to that of the white population. The infant mortality rate for whites, for example, is 9.3 per 1,000 whereas it is 18.2 per 1,000 for Blacks, and as high as 23.7 in some states, such as Michigan. "Through the mid-1980s, the per capita income of Blacks has remained less than 60 percent that of whites. . . . The proportion of Black families receiving incomes under \$5,000 increased from 8.9 percent to 14 percent in 1986." In New York City 75 percent of the homeless are Black and Latino; one out of every four Black males is either in prison or being supervised under some form of parole system; and whereas 34 percent of all adults had not completed high school in 1978, the percentage of Blacks in the same category was 52.4 percent, etc.

The inferior position of African Americans, Native Americans, and Latinos vis-a-vis the white population is not accidental, Wareham argued, but is based on systematic racial discrimination and national oppression. This argument forms the basis of Freedom Now's contention that "those who are most oppressed by the injustices of our society, and those who protest them most vigorously, are not permitted to do so, but are instead subjected to lawless repression and inhumane treatment." In other words, the political prisoners are those radicalized sections of the population who have decided to struggle in one form or another against the intolerable conditions of racial and national oppression.

Roger Wareham reports that the response from other countries was both "positive" and "interesting." More than 50 countries and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) requested copies of the intervention. The United States was thus being scrutinized at a time when it was taking credit for being the agent of change in Eastern Europe and for restoring "democracy" to Panama.

The U.S. representative at the session refused Wareham's request to exercise the right of reply. Instead, according to Wareham, the United States indirectly responded in typical "ugly American, unsophisticated" fashion by distributing a "sleek, glossy" booklet put out by the United States Information Agency (USIA), outlining the gains that Black people have supposedly made as a result of the civil rights movement.

But what was even more revealing about the U.S. government's attitude was its position during the discussion on economic rights, as a part of the broader question of human rights. The United States criticized those who put too much emphasis on economic rights. In the view of the U.S. delegation, to emphasize economic rights is to "water down" the political and civil rights aspect of human rights. In essence, what the U.S. was saying, according to Wareham, is that the right to vote every four years is more important than "having a table to sit at, with food on it, with a roof over your head, and a job to be able to pay for whatever you need to live." It is on this question of economic rights that Wareham believes that the United States is most vulnerable.

Ahmed Obafemi of Freedom Now has no illusion about what sort of effort will be needed to bring about the hoped-for UN resolution condemning the United States for its treatment of political prisoners, and to get an investigation of the conditions facing political prisoners in this country. It will require a protracted process of work. He sees one of the main lessons of the campaign thus far as being the fact that Freedom Now will have to do much more work to educate the American public about the plight of political prisoners.

In many cases foreign organizations and some governments respond sympathetically to the campaign but seem to be gauging their response on the need to see some kind of a political movement developing within the United States on behalf of the prisoners. That the United States exercises considerable economic and political leverage over other countries is also not an insignificant factor.

The next stage of the campaign, according to Obafemi, is to have these political prisoners become household names. Freedom Now sponsored a day-long "International Symposium on Political Prisoners in the United States" on April 28th at the Borough of Manhattan Community College. The objective of this event was to increase public awareness and to prepare for an International Tribunal in the fall of 1990, to examine the cases of these prisoners and to take the campaign to a higher level.

While it is clear that the general public is not widely aware of the extremes to which the government has gone on so many occasions to suppress its left-wing opponents, the African, Latino, and Native American communities are much more aware of these tactics—if only because these communities are in constant battle against the racism of the criminal justice system. It is thus within these communities, at least in the short term, that the Freedom Now movement has its best chance of building public support. But defending political prisoners and educating the public about their plight should not be the duty of Freedom Now *alone*. Such work has to receive top priority from all organizations and individuals committed to revolutionary social change. No one can afford to have any illusions about the extent to which the ruling class will go to preserve the status quo. □

Ernest Mandel and Gregor Gysi Debate in East Berlin!

The following is from the June 5 issue of the Belgian newspaper, La Gauche. Translation for the Bulletin in Defense of Marxism is by Michael Frank. Gysi's party, Party of Democratic Socialism, was formerly the ruling Stalinist party in East Germany, the Socialist Unity Party (SED).

More than a thousand people attended a debate between Gregor Gysi, the president of the PDS (Party of Democratic Socialism), and Ernest Mandel on May 25 in East Berlin. Many people had to be turned away because the room and the adjacent halls were too small to accommodate them.

A First

It was the first time that a leader of the Fourth International could freely debate with the president of a mass party coming out of the so-called "international communist movement." The PDS has several hundred thousand members. It received 16 percent of the votes in the free legislative elections that took place in the GDR, and more than 30 percent in working class strongholds such as East Berlin, Eisenhüttenstadt (the steel industry town), Rostock, Schwerin, and Neubrandenburg in the municipal elections that followed.

The meeting was organized jointly by the PDS and the Trotskyist comrades of the GDR. The latter put up numerous posters that they had themselves printed and distributed numerous flyers announcing the meeting. While pasting up posters, they were assaulted by a group of fascists. One comrade was slightly injured. Our comrades had a literature table at the entrance to the meeting hall. They sold a hundred copies of works by Leon Trotsky, as well as numerous books of Mandel and other comrades of the Fourth International.

The theme of the debate was: "Does socialism still have a future?" By mutual agreement, the debate was divided into three sections; the causes of the collapse of 1989, the prospects for socialism, and the political space for socialists/communists in capitalist Europe (including in a Germany unified on a capitalist basis).

Mandel

Ernest Mandel stressed the historical causes of the collapse of Stalinism in the GDR and in several countries of Eastern Europe. It is necessary, said our comrade, to offer a comprehensive and coherent explanation of the Stalinist phenomenon; despotic dictatorship of a bureaucracy, a privileged social layer that usurped the power of the working class and established a monopoly of political power to defend and extend its material privileges. The Stalinist bureaucracy then exported these forms of power to the GDR by military occupation and police power,

against the will of the majority of the working population of the country.

These practices were tied to an ideology that broke with Marxism and substituted for the imperative that the emancipation of the workers can only be accomplished by the workers themselves the construction of a pseudo-socialism by state decree, a hybrid semiplanning, and a tutelage over the masses in all areas of social life.

These practices and theories went bankrupt. It is the bankruptcy of Stalinism, not of socialism. It is necessary to create political, economic, social, cultural, and moral conditions so that they are never reproduced. The future of socialism depends on it.

Only the self-activity and the free and democratic self-organization of the laboring masses, only worker self-management of the factories and the struggle of parties who consider themselves the vanguard in the framework of these organs of self-organization can assure the gradual construction of socialism, which can only be completed on a world scale.

Mandel stressed the fact that if the present conjuncture is unfavorable, if imperialism is on the offensive, if the workers are on the defensive, if the communists/socialists have to wage a long battle against the current, there is no reason to doubt the future and the historic chances of socialism.

These chances flow from the internal contradictions of capitalism that are leading and will inevitably lead to a series of explosive crises. They flow from the possibility that the Soviet proletariat, the largest in the world, will end up, after an inevitable interval, by triumphing both over the nomenklatura and the procapitalist restorationist forces, thanks to a victorious political revolution. They flow from the powerful militant energies that the fall of Stalinism and the crisis of social democracy are freeing and will free in numerous countries and in numerous mass movements.

Finally, Mandel emphasized that there is no place in capitalist Europe and in a Germany reunified on a capitalist basis for two social democratic parties and two variants of the same reformist strategy. He warned the comrades of the PDS that they will only have a political space in a reunified Germany if they position themselves clearly to the left of the SPD [Social Democratic Party] and the Greens, if they support, without reservations and without searching for some kind of consensus with the bourgeoisie, all the mass movements: those of the workers, including the trade union militants, those of the ecologists, the feminists, the antimilitarists, the partisans of radical, direct, grass-roots democracy, and the movements of solidarity with the liberation struggles of people of the third world.

It is only through the progress of such mass struggles that socialist education and propaganda, more necessary now than ever, will permit the overcoming of the crisis of credibility of the socialist project.

Gysi

Gregor Gysi began his intervention by apologizing to comrade Mandel for the repression of which he had been the victim in the GDR; forbidden entry (Mandel is the only personality of the European workers' movement, he recalled, who was forbidden entry both to the GDR and the FRG), slanderous and lying attacks in publications, etc. He extended these apologies to all the victims of Stalinist repression in the heart of the German and international workers' movement. This opening intervention received prolonged applause.

Then, following upon the analyses and proposals of Mandel, Gysi noted his agreements and disagreements. He declared himself, like Mandel, against the restoration of capitalism in the GDR, but considered that this was practically inevitable given the relation of forces. It is necessary then to wage defensive struggles so that the workers in the GDR and the FRG do not pay the costs of the capitalist reunification.

Gysi gave, like Mandel, priority to the struggle for the demilitarization of Germany and for the dismantling of all the police apparatuses. He also approved most of the slogans advanced by Mandel, but was much more hesitant on the question of solidarity with the third world liberation movements, without opposing it as such.

Two important divergences then emerged.

Contrary to Mandel, Gysi is of the opinion that the socialists, in order to determine their strategy, must base themselves above all on global phenomena and the threats that bear down on the human species, rather than on the internal contradictions of the capitalist system.

Next, Gysi assessed that the possibilities of revolution were practically excluded for a long period, at least in the principal countries of the world, and above all in Europe. In these conditions, according to him, priority goes to the struggle for reforms. He outlined several examples, including aid to localities and fiscal policy.

And in this regard, he said, it is necessary to reevaluate the role of social democracy. It has realized a series of important reforms benefiting the workers and the masses in general. It is necessary to recognize the capital importance of this and the necessity of being inspired by it under the present conditions. Gysi reproached Mandel for an excessively negative attitude in regard to the social democracy. He put in doubt the responsibility of the failure of the German revolution of 1918-1919 for the ascension of Stalinism.

Debate

In his reply, Mandel denounced a series of historic crimes committed by the social democracy, crimes which are not less grave than the crimes committed by the Stalinists: responsibility in the massacre of more than 10,000 German workers in 1919, including coresponsibility for the murder of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, responsibility for bloody colonial wars and for an antiworker policy of austerity in numerous European countries.

But he stressed the fact that these severe criticisms, and the equally severe criticisms in regard to the Stalinist and post-Stalinist CPs of capitalist Europe, do not prevent in any way a policy of united workers' front, which implies a permanent debate and dialogue, at the summit and at the base, in a climate of tolerance, that is to say, an opposition to all attempts to exclude any current of the workers' movement. He recalled on this occasion the exemplary struggle led by Trotsky and the International Left Opposition for the united front in Germany between 1929 and 1933, a united front that would have saved the German working class from the historic disaster of the Nazi seizure of power and the creation of the Third Reich.

He launched an appeal to the German social democracy to break with the practice of *Berufsverbote* (the law forbidding dissidents from entering certain professions) in regard to the CP (tomorrow without a doubt also in regard to the PDS), to abandon all attempts to criminalize the PDS which would inevitably turn against the entire workers' movement, and to remember in this regard what a terrible price the entire American left paid for McCarthyism.

He recalled that one of the high points of the Communist International before its Stalinization was the international campaign of solidarity with two anarchists, Sacco and Vanzetti, adversaries of communism. This campaign, the organization of which our American comrade James P. Cannon played an eminent role, should inspire all organizations like the PDS which are breaking with Stalinism to return to the class principles: against the common enemy, one for all, all for one.

Gregor Gysi fully supported this appeal.

The International

After the president had adjourned the meeting, comrade Mandel asked those present to sing the *International* and immediately began singing. The audience, surprised, hesitated a moment, then in unison, standing, sang our anthem, the anthem of the world workers' movement.

The next day, the newspaper of the PDS, *Neues Deutschland* (New Germany), published on the front page an account of the debate and printed a long interview with Mandel on the origins, the current implantation, and the politics of the Fourth International. □

Potential for a Conscious, Working Class Revolutionary Movement in the USSR

by Marilyn Vogt-Downey

The political revolution in the USSR to overthrow the power of the bureaucratic caste and establish workers' control, like the social revolutions to overthrow the economic and political rule of capital where it holds sway, must inevitably deal with a broad range of social problems. Workers' struggles do not just originate in the mines and factories, as fundamental as these are. They also include those waged by women; by the non-Russians for self-determination and independence from authoritarian, Great Russian-chauvinist central rule; by people fighting to clean up or protect the water, air, and land; and by those who labor tirelessly to unearth historic truth from beneath the mountains of Stalinist lies and falsification, to vindicate the honor of millions of victims.

Participating in and helping advance and strengthen these existing struggles, and helping solve the crises of Soviet society in a way that will serve the interests of the laboring millions, is one of the most urgent tasks of our time. The process requires that the bureaucracy's apparatchiks be expelled and replaced by representatives of those in struggle, that workers have access to long suppressed information, that economic data be available for study, that the history of the bureaucracy's crimes within the Soviet Union and internationally be widely accessible. These things must be the subject of a broad consultation and discussion. In short, the solutions to the present crises require that the working masses in all sectors regain the power they lost with the degeneration of the Russian Revolution in the late 1920s and early '30s. Such power for the workers is neither in the interests of the Stalinist rulers nor the world's capitalists, and they will do everything possible to stop it. Only revolutionary collaboration and unity of all involved in these struggles around the world can lay the basis for achieving the historic task of political revolution in the USSR.

This summer I returned to the Soviet Union a little over a year after my first 1989 trip (see "A Visit to the USSR," *Bulletin in Defense of Marxism* No. 67). Although I was only there for three weeks in August, when much political activity suffers from summer holidays, it seemed evident that the necessary elements within the country for such international unity and collaboration were beginning to take shape. What is now urgently needed is a conscious effort by organized, revolutionary-minded activists around the world to help their sisters and brothers in the USSR.

In the rest of this article I will cite some examples of on-going developments in the USSR that deserve attention and support.

Memorial Committee and the Fight for Historic Truth

The "All-Union Volunteer Social-Historical Society 'Memorial'" is continuing and expanding its work to collect all conceivable data from throughout the Soviet Union on the repression of the Stalin period, and make it accessible to the public in permanent archives and libraries. Memorial's work includes historical investigation, organizing material assistance to surviving victims of Stalin, and putting on public events. Its work has now taken root in 150 cities, including the non-Russian republics and regions that were part of the vast system of forced labor camps where mass graves of victims are being unearthed. Despite this widespread activity and continuing campaign, the Stalinist rulers have so far only recognized the Moscow branch as an official organization. This formally permits the Moscow Memorial Com-

mittee to have its own legal premises, though in fact this has not yet been obtained.

Memorial has succeeded in forcing the rulers to allow the erection of a stone monument to the victims of Stalin on Dzerzhinsky Square in central Moscow. This is where the headquarters of the Committee of State Security (KGB) is located, as were all of its Stalinist predecessors, along with the notorious Lubyanka prison where untold numbers of the bureaucracy's victims were tortured and shot. The monument is to be dedicated in October, according to Nikolai Starkov, one of the Memorial organizers. Memorial is also campaigning for an eternal flame to be installed in Red Square in memory of the 20 million victims of Stalin's repression, next to the eternal flame commemorating the same number who perished during World War II.

The struggle for the resurrection of historic truth is far from over. Only around one million of Stalin's victims had been rehabilitated by the time of the 28th Communist Party Congress in July, according to Alexander Yakovlev—head of the government committee investigating crimes of the Stalin period—in his address to the congress. The rulers are obviously feeling the pressure to try to dissociate themselves from Stalin's mass murder as more and more evidence of his crimes is uncovered and publicized.

Irina Osipova, a key activist in Memorial in Moscow, reported that one of the organization's volunteers, Dmitri Urasov, has been putting together a card file for the past two years on those who were shot or sentenced during 1936-38. He has managed to assemble records on approximately 140,000 persons. The extent of the work that remains to be done is accentuated by an offer from the Leningrad KGB to release to Leningrad Memorial 40,000 names per week, for an indefinite period, of that city's victims. Considerable help from Memorial supporters will be required to process such an enormous flow of important information.

Rehabilitations of Stalin's victims are now taking place in massive sweeps. On August 13, through a decree signed by Gorbachev, all the repressions carried out by "special conferences, collegiums, 'troikas,' and 'dvoikas,'" [three or two-person kangaroo courts] were declared illegal, including those "directed at the peasantry in the period of collectivization, and also toward other citizens for political, social, national, religious, and other motives in the 1920s through the 1950s. . . . The rights of these citizens," almost all of whom are now dead, were declared "fully restored." The decree opened by admitting that "the massive repression, the arbitrariness and illegality which were carried out

Due to Marilyn Vogt-Downey's trip to the USSR, reported in these pages, there will be no installment of the memoirs of Mikhail Baitalsky, *Notebooks for the Grandchildren*, in this issue of the *Bulletin in Defense of Marxism*. We will continue with the next chapter, "Conversations in the Main Alley," in our November issue.

by the Stalin leadership in the name of the revolution and the people is an awesome heritage of the past." It is significant that the decree dates this to the mid-1920s—when the repression began against the Left Opposition led by Leon Trotsky.

Memorial is currently sponsoring, with the support of a number of unions, an art exhibit called "Creativity in the Camps and in Exile." It shows a wide variety of art by prisoners—paintings, drawings, sketches, and portraits of prisoners and on camp themes, as well as a range of craft work. There is a wall full of photographs and small biographies of dozens of artists, architects, and designers who were shot, perished, or spent large portions of their lives in the prisons and camps. This photo display is a tiny reminder of the vast human creativity that society lost as a result of the repression of the Stalin era. The exhibit was organized by Valentina Tikhonova, daughter of a Bolshevik leader Vladimir Antonov-Ovseenko who, along with Valentina's mother, was shot in February 1938.

So far, Leon Trotsky and his son Leon Sedov, along with many other supporters of the Opposition, have not been rehabilitated. Vyacheslav M. Voinov—a historian from Orenburg in the Ural Mountains region of Central Russia who is active in Memorial there and who is a supporter of Trotsky's ideas—reports that of the 400 or so victims of Stalin in Orenburg who had been the focus of the Memorial campaign, all have been rehabilitated by the Kremlin except for 20 or so Trotskyists. Whether or not the August 13 decree will include the Trotskyists remains to be seen.

Publication of Trotsky's Writings

However, although Trotsky has still not been officially exonerated, more and more of his works, and more and more of the truth about him, are appearing—from both official and unofficial sources.

For example, in June 150,000 copies of *Toward the History of the Russian Revolution*, a selection of writings by Trotsky, was published by Politizdat, the official publisher of political literature in Moscow. This volume's more than 400 pages includes "Results and Prospects," excerpts from "How the Revolution Armed Itself," "The New Course," "Lessons of October," more than 100 pages from *History of the Russian Revolution*, and other works.

The Stalin School of Falsification, printed in a run of 200,000 by the official publisher "Nauka" [Science], also appeared this summer. It is a facsimile edition of the work as published by "Granite" in Berlin in 1932.

A cooperative publishing enterprise, "TERRA," in July printed 100,000 copies of "The Trotsky Archives: the Communist Opposition in the USSR, 1923-27." This consists of documents from the Trotsky archives held at Harvard University, as assembled by Soviet historian Dr. Yuri Felshtinsky. He is now working in the United States. The work, a four-volume set originally issued in the U.S. by Chalidze Publications in 1988, contains documents written not only by Trotsky, but by other Bolsheviks and supporters of the Opposition.

According to Russian Marxist Boris Kagarlitsky, Trotsky's *My Life* will soon be published by a cooperative in Irkutsk, with an introduction by Kagarlitsky.

A Trotsky scholar, Professor Victor Danilov, who wrote the introduction to the Russian-language edition of Pierre Broué's new biography of Trotsky, reports that Politizdat also plans to publish the full *History of the Russian Revolution* and its own edition of *My Life*. It is also considering publication of *The Revolution Betrayed* and the Left Opposition's journal, *Bulletin of the Opposition*.

Meanwhile, Progress Publishers and a cooperative are projecting to print their own edition of *The Revolution Betrayed* in October, and may publish other Trotsky writings.

Articles by and about Trotsky appeared in many publications. For example, in July and August both *Moscow News* and *Znamya*

printed excerpts from Trotsky's *Diaries 1935-40*; and the government daily *Izvestia* of August 17 printed a full-page article entitled "Trotsky: History, Fate, Experiences." It is an interview with Dmitry A. Volkogonov, who is called a doctor of historical and philosophical sciences, and whose own biography of Trotsky *Leon Trotsky, A Political Portrait* is scheduled to appear soon.

In the first half of the article, Volkogonov refutes some of the common Stalinist slanders against Trotsky and presents objective and informative data about the consistent work by Trotsky and Sedov—in defense of revolutionary Marxism and against Stalinism—from exile. For example, he admits that Sedov's closest assistant, Etienne—who was a Stalin agent—helped steal part of Trotsky's archives in Paris in 1936, which many had previously suspected to be the case (see *Bulletin in Defense of Marxism* No. 44). He describes how Trotsky was relentlessly harassed by bourgeois governments during his exile because of his revolutionary politics, and how Trotsky and his supporters—despite the difficulties—organized the Dewey Commission to successfully refute Stalin's false charges against Trotsky during the Moscow trials. He credits "New York Trotskyists" with this effort.

Volkogonov also discusses the special group of the secret police that was established, at the end of the 1920s, for "foreign work." It was strengthened in the spring of 1937 to assassinate Stalin's opponents abroad, especially supporters of the Opposition. He sometimes visits the locations where some of these victims are buried in Paris and places "flowers on the graves of those who we for so long considered political opponents, but who are returning to us now with their books, ideas, and love for the Fatherland. I hope," he continues, "that the time will come when we will be able to rise above passions and feel sorry for all those who crossed swords [sic] in that fratricidal civil war that cost 13 million lives." (These foreign agents of Stalin assassinated fascists, too, Volkogonov asks us to remember; and some of them "sincerely believed that they were acting in the interests of socialism.")

In the second half of the article, however, the tone changes, almost as if it were written by another author. After having defended Trotsky as a revolutionary leader, and naming Trotsky's posts and achievements, Volkogonov then reraises some old Stalinist slanders, as well as some new ones: "But at the same time, Trotsky was merciless toward those who would not subordinate themselves to revolutionary discipline, and frequently demanded execution, but usually after a trial. . . . Trotsky was involved in the creation of the first concentration camps.

"Most surely there would have been less blood," if Trotsky had prevailed over Stalin, he goes on. "But pursuing his idea of world revolution, he could have dragged the country into very dangerous adventures. . . . Trotsky fanatically believed in the idea of world revolution. For the sake of it he was prepared to sacrifice himself and others. I can assume, if the atomic bomb ended up at his disposal, he was capable of using it."

Volkogonov attacks Trotsky's character. For example, Trotsky "was accustomed to comfort" and took good care of himself, which is why he preferred to remain in the Caucasus looking after himself instead of interrupting his plans by attending Lenin's funeral. The fact that the Stalin clique in the Politburo only informed Trotsky of Lenin's death when it would be too late for Trotsky to return in time for the funeral is left out of Volkogonov's account.

The distortions and falsification of history used by Volkogonov to slander Trotsky end up as a backhanded recommendation. He admits toward the end of the article that he himself has now concluded that communism is a utopian idea and that such "abstract goals engender fanatics, like Trotsky and his supporters."

If Volkogonov's book about Trotsky is in the same vein as this article, it could provide some important material that has been long suppressed about the intrigues of the Stalinist clique against the Marxist movement. However, Volkogonov may live to regret

having agreed to write the book. His attacks on Trotsky do not withstand examination by those who already know some of the real history, now more and more available to masses of people. For all that he may contribute, he is shown to be a contemptible apologist for Stalinism and a continuator of its reviled practices.

Other writers present a more straightforward character assassination of Trotsky, like Karen Khachaturov—also described as a “doctor of historical sciences”—in an article in *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, August 22. The nature of the article’s contents are betrayed in its title: “Thoughts on the anniversary of Trotsky’s assassination: Both Were Worse.” While commenting that it is about time the slander campaign against Trotsky is exposed for what it was, Khachaturov presents Trotsky as no more than “a more substantial” version of Stalin, for whom no tears should be shed.

These articles were written on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of Trotsky’s assassination, August 20, 1940. Three important features connected with this appeared in *Trud*, daily organ of the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions, having a circulation of almost 21.4 million. The issues of August 14 and 15 printed an interview with Luis Mercader, brother of Trotsky’s assassin. In keeping with the bureaucracy’s practices in the post-glasnost era, the material presented was calculated to inspire more sympathy for the assassin than for his victim. Nevertheless, it shed considerable light on the details of the plot and the personalities involved in it.

The third item, published in *Trud’s* August 19 issue, was an article by G. Yoffe, identified as a doctor of historical sciences. It was titled, “Road of Struggle and Mistakes: Tomorrow will be the 50th anniversary of L. Trotsky’s murder.” With a few minor editorial comments, the article is a straightforward defense of Trotsky as one who “by his whole life’s work proved himself true to the ideals of the October revolution and Leninism.”

Attempt to Found ‘Trotskyist’ Organization

Also in commemoration of the 50th anniversary of Trotsky’s assassination a conference was called in Moscow by the Workers International to Rebuild the Fourth International (WIRFI). This is a new group formed at the initiative of the Workers Revolutionary Party in Britain, which was headed by Gerry Healy until his expulsion in the mid-1980s. In the 1970s the Healyites launched a slander campaign against long-time U.S. Socialist Workers Party leaders Joseph Hansen and George Novack, accusing them of being agents of the FBI and Soviet secret police. The U.S. affiliate of this international current, organized in the “Workers League,” has consistently aided government harassment of left groups here. It was responsible for a disruption lawsuit brought against the SWP by Alan Gelfand in Los Angeles, and has given support to the government in its frame-up of SWP activist Mark Curtis on a rape charge in Des Moines, Iowa.

The Moscow conference on August 18-19 had been organized on very short notice by the WIRFI. Its goal was to set up a group in the USSR supporting its own political perspective and calling itself the Soviet section of the Fourth International. Only 30 or so attended, about a third of whom were part of the WIRFI contingent—mostly from Britain, with one each from Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and East Germany. These WIRFI delegates attacked the United Secretariat of the Fourth International, and its political policies, in extremely harsh terms, raising false and sectarian charges.

Komsomolskaya Pravda featured a lengthy, if uncomplimentary, report of the meeting and even a photograph of the banner WIRFI had made for the occasion.

There were considerable differences in the views expressed by those present on a wide range of issues. Some agreed to collaborate on the publication of a discussion bulletin that would be open to Trotskyists in the USSR and on the organization of an international conference in Moscow during 1991. Their plan is to invite repre-

sentatives of the various international groups which consider themselves part of the world Trotskyist movement, and not just supporters of the WIRFI as the conference initiators had intended. The Soviet citizens present agreed that it was important to unite in continuing to pressure the government to rehabilitate Trotsky and his supporters, though as one might expect there was some disagreement among them about how this should be done.

Although it was not in the plans of the WIRFI, I was invited to attend the conference—as a supporter of the United Secretariat of the FI—by two of the Russian Marxists who helped to organize the meeting, Aleksei Zverev and Vyacheslav Voinov. I was able to speak and participate in the discussions. It was clear that although the Soviet participants appreciated the effort of the WIRFI, they were interested in promoting unity of revolutionary forces abroad, not in becoming part of any sectarian maneuver. (See text of comments by some of those present at the conference beginning on p. 21.)

Despite the factional goals of the conference organizers, it was a valuable opportunity for activists who consider themselves Trotskyists, revolutionary Marxists, left-wing anarchists, and socialists in the USSR to meet openly for the first time, to exchange views and discuss perspectives amongst themselves and with individuals from abroad.

Protest Against Massacre of Uzbeks

Just off Red Square, a new group had recently joined the tent city of Soviet citizens camped out in front of the Hotel Rossiya one day when I stopped by.

Many Supreme Soviet deputies stay at the hotel when that body is in session. Several dozen individuals and families who have suffered considerable injustice, and who have not received satisfaction elsewhere from any authority to any of their appeals, have decided to appeal directly to the deputies as they walk or drive by on their way to the Palace of Congresses in the Kremlin. These protesters have handmade poster-sized accounts of their complaints, and attract a constant flow of curious passersby, who usually sympathize with their causes. In fact, this site rivals Pushkin Square as a place to go for political discussion. (Pushkin Square, in front of the *Moscow News* building, like the Kazan Cathedral in Leningrad, has over the past two years developed into a meeting place where one can almost always find political discussions on a variety of issues.)

The new tent in tent city belonged to Uzbeks representing the Uzbek Youth Committee on the Osh Events. Osh is the name of a city and a province in the Kirghiz Republic. The Osh Province borders on the Uzbek Republic and the majority of the population is Uzbek. This region was the scene of a massacre of Uzbeks last June.

The crisis was precipitated when the authorities announced that land previously belonging to Uzbeks would be parceled out to individuals of the Kirghiz population. When Uzbeks, on June 4, gathered in the city of Osh to protest that decision, they were surrounded by well-organized, armed goons and brutally attacked. Similar attacks took place over the next two days in the nearby city of Uzgen, and in a number of other towns and settlements. More than 500 homes were burned to the ground and more than a thousand Uzbeks were killed, according to Shukhrat Ashurov, an Uzbek student and artist who is the leader of the youth committee.

The Youth Committee on the Osh Events was organized to expose the truth about what took place. Its members say that the massacre was not an expression of “interethnic conflict” as officially reported; the Uzbeks and Kirghiz peoples have long lived peacefully, side-by-side. The attacks were instigated by the authorities to try to get the Uzbeks and Kirghiz peoples fighting among themselves, so they would not unite against the privileged bureaucratic apparatus—their common enemy—that has tightly controlled the entire area since Stalin’s time. Orchestrated attacks

like this have consistently been used as an excuse by the central government to send troops into an area and declare martial law.

The Uzbek youth group, bringing together activists from a number of regions in Central Asia, began a hunger strike in mid-August in the tent just off Red Square to draw attention to their demand. They are asking that authoritative commissions be established by the Soviet government and by the United Nations to investigate and tell the truth about the events in Osh, and expose the responsibility of government figures for the mass murders. They say that the massacres of Armenians in Sumgait in the Azerbaijan Republic in February 1988, of Meskhetis in Fergan in the Uzbek Republic in June 1989, of Armenians in Baku in Azerbaijan in January 1990, and similar so-called interethnic conflicts—which have cost hundreds of lives and created hundreds of thousands of refugees—were similarly government-inspired. As Shukhrat explained it: “The main reason for the conflict is the imperial ambition to divide and rule.”

Because the areas where these massacres have occurred have been quickly placed under martial law, because the victimized populations remain paralyzed by fear or have been dispersed far from each other and from their homes, living—at best—in temporary shelters, it has been very difficult for them to organize in a common struggle by reaching out to those from other areas of the USSR who have been similarly victimized.

“The government sets all manner of obstacles in the way of our establishing political links,” Shukhrat explained. “The government does not want to allow us to relate to one another. However, if the mass media were to give objective information, as we are demanding, more people would realize what is going on and it would be possible to organize a common movement. But the mass media does not do that. Instead of reporting the more than one thousand deaths [in Osh in June], the mass media claims that only around 200 were killed.

“We are appealing to the United Nations to help us by establishing an international commission to give a clear political assessment that will show that what has occurred in the USSR—these bloody fratricidal battles—have been provoked by those in power. We hope all people who have lost their close relatives, whether in Azerbaijan, Armenia, Tadjikistan, Kirghiz, Uzbekistan, or from other regions of the USSR will join us and support our demands for an independent, authoritative investigation that will expose the criminals in power who are a threat to us all.”

The criminals in the case of the Osh massacres, the Uzbeks report, are the party and government officials on the local, provincial, and republic levels who conspired to issue the order to parcel out Uzbek land to Kirghiz, and then hired the goons to organize and inspire Kirghiz and others to massacre Uzbeks when they protested.

Mexico City Trotsky Commemoration

Presencia de Trotsky! This was the title of a week-long commemoration last August in Mexico City of the 50th anniversary of the assassination of Leon Trotsky. The title expresses the purpose of the commemoration ceremonies and meetings—the presence of Trotsky—to bring his ideas (long distorted and disparaged, and largely concealed) to public attention, to explain how they have influenced the history of the 20th century and their relevance to current political developments. Scholars, historians, revolutionaries, and people who had known Trotsky participated in seminars and political rallies at the University of Mexico.

The first of these was on August 14, called “Trotsky and Mexico.” Others during the week addressed current questions: “Marx, Lenin, Trotsky: Critique of ‘Real Socialism’ and Perestroika” and “Trotsky and the Current Capitalist Transformation.” The final seminar, “Trotsky and the Future of Socialism,” drew an audience of over 2,000. Ernest Mandel, representing the Fourth International, was the main speaker.

On Monday, August 20, the day 50 years ago that Trotsky was assassinated, visitors gathered at the house where he had lived and worked with his companion Natalya Sedova and grandson Esteban Volkov.

One of the U.S. newspaper accounts about the commemoration in Mexico described the Monday event. These are excerpts from the July 21 *Dallas Morning Star* story:

Trotsky’s house in a residential neighborhood has been restored to its original condition and turned into a museum. An adjoining building was opened as the Institute of the Right of Asylum and Public Liberties.

It was a long way from 1937, when no nation wanted to grant asylum to Trotsky, prompting a French poet to remark, “the Earth is a planet without a visa for Leon Trotsky.”

“People are recognizing that he was one of the great human beings of our century, probably the greatest mind of our century,” said Jake Cooper, a Teamster leader and truck driver who came to Mexico in the spring of 1940 to serve as Trotsky’s bodyguard.

“This marks the end of the longest, darkest night in history. It’s over,” said Trotsky’s only living grandson, 64-year-old Esteban Volkov.

In a scene his grandfather might never have believed, Mr. Volkov sat on a platform with the Soviet ambassador to Mexico as one person after another read tributes.

For five decades, Soviet school children learned that Trotsky “was an enemy of the party and the people,”

said Soviet ambassador Oleg T. Darusenkov.

Now, he said, “We are in the process of treating historical figures to an objective look. It is a labor that will take some time, because people of my generation and early generations have some blank pages to fill in.”

This comment, “some blank pages to fill in,” is often repeated in the Soviet Union and appears to be a standard excuse for the resistance to erasing the falsifications about Trotsky and revealing the facts about his work and struggle. That is why meetings marking the anniversary of his assassination are so important. And commemorative programs are being held around the world.

A committee of scholars at the University of Tokyo is organizing an international symposium on Trotsky’s thought to be held November 2 through 4. The committee has arranged for participants from the Soviet Union, France, Belgium, Sri Lanka, and Mexico. Vladimir Billik, a Leningrad historian, is one of the invited speakers from the Soviet Union. Readers of *Bulletin in Defense of Marxism* may recall the name. In August 1989 the *Komsomolskaya Pravda* carried an interview with Billik about Trotsky which was reprinted in issue No. 68 of our magazine, titled “TROTSKY: On the Road to the Truth About Him.” □

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Some Uzbeks, too, have been guilty of participation in massacres, as, for instance, against the Meskhetis in Fergan last year, Shukhrat explained. "As the year has passed, we have quietly begun to realize that every nation has its murderers, its extremists, its bandits" who can be used by the government for its own purposes.

Self-Immolation of Women in Central Asia

Among the seven on hunger strike were two women. The sister of one of these women, Nazira Buriboeva, was among the 233 women in rural Uzbek who are known to have burned themselves to death in 1989 to protest the repressive situation that they faced. Although this horrifying phenomenon has been going on for many years, it was not until the glasnost reforms in the USSR that reports about it became public. Even women from the Uzbek intelligentsia, like Damira Kuldasheva, who lived all their lives in the republic's capital, Tashkent, did not know this was going on until reports about it appeared on television in 1987-88.

Damira, her brother Shukhrat, and others have begun collecting data on these self-burnings so as to be able to form a more accurate picture of the crisis and make information available to the rest of the world. They are trying to set up a center that would assist women, take care of the hundreds of orphaned children, and provide burn treatment for those who continue to resort to such an extreme measure in order to escape from their oppressive and impoverished lives. According to Damira, every year the number of self-immolations increases and the ages of the women involved gets younger and younger. She has collected data showing at least 1,730 cases of self-immolation by women since 1978.

This mass suicide of Uzbek women—Nazira, Damira, and Shukhrat explained—is a product of the combination of social and economic factors which prevail in Central Asia as a result of decades of bureaucratic rule:

- In addition to the antidemocratic, repressive control of the local party and government apparatus, the women suffer under a system of rigid, near-feudal, patriarchal relations to which their needs are subordinated.
- The virtual mono-crop cotton economy produces little food. The typical regular diet for a rural family is bread with salt and tea with sugar.
- Labor intensive cultivation and low wages require that all family members, except those physically unable to do so, work the fields. Prevalent child labor practices mean children receive inadequate education.
- Chemicals applied to the crops poison the land, water, and even the women's own milk for breast-feeding their babies.
- A lack of birth control means women have no control over their bodies or the size of their families.

Theirs is a life of unbearable shortages of food, education, health care, housing, joy, and hope.

"Thanks to glasnost, we finally have the opportunity to form and join informal groups and movements to begin to challenge the party's power over us," Shukhrat explained. It had been impossible to organize previously, to deal with problems they did not know existed. But with glasnost "an independent press appeared and more and more of the truth came out, even in the official press. However, soon the party bureaucrats began to fear that they would lose their power and their authority would diminish. Therefore, in order to divide and rule, they provoked these bloody interethnic, civil wars," to hamper the struggle.

Other Nationalist Movements

The assessment of the young Uzbeks that the violence among the minority nationalities is government inspired is shared by others.

Vartan G. Mushekyan, a longtime activist in the democratic and nationalist movements in Armenia and the head of the Memorial branch in Yerevan, compiled a booklet—*Sumgait . . . Genocide . . . Glasnost?*—documenting the government's role in both organizing and facilitating the Sumgait massacres in February 1988. While several Azeris have been convicted on charges of involvement in the massacre, Vartan's booklet shows that there are many witnesses to verify that it was local, regional, and national authorities who were really responsible for it. Dozens of Armenians were killed at Sumgait. It was a time when the Armenians in Nagorno-Karabagh and the Armenian Republic were mobilized in a massive way to show their support for the demand to reunify the two Armenian regions.

The Sumgait massacres were officially presented as a spontaneous eruption of long-smoldering interethnic Armenian-Azeri hostility. They created disorientation, fear, and distrust. There is, of course, no denying that once such attacks have been provoked—and fears are fed by rumors circulated even in the official media—the conflicts can become real, taking on a life of their own. This, in turn, as Shukhrat described, only tends to legitimize the central bureaucracy's troop occupations and policies of repression.

Another Armenian, Valery Petrosyan, who currently resides in Moscow, presents evidence to show that the same scenario generally describes the January 1990 massacre of Armenians and others in Baku. That massacre served as the pretext for the central government to dispatch thousands more troops to the Caucasus where they have remained despite the widespread hostility of the local population.

An intense discussion took place one afternoon in Pushkin Square between an Armenian and a Russian. "Why aren't those in the Russian democratic rights movements demanding the withdrawal of Ministry of Interior troops from the Caucasus?" the Armenian wanted to know. In response the Russian blamed the Armenians for the presence of the troops, claiming that it was Armenian massacres of Azeris that caused the troops to be sent in.

The fact is, however, that many more Armenians and Azeris have been killed by government troops than have died in the so-called interethnic conflicts. Moreover, the official militias and troops appear either unable or unwilling to protect unarmed civilians from the well-organized goon-type massacres.

It was because they have no confidence in the official militia or the central government troops that the Armenians, in recent months, have organized to defend themselves. Gorbachev's ultimatums and threats—directed toward forcibly disarming the Armenian popular militias—have been unsuccessful. The armed detachments are now under the protection/jurisdiction of the newly elected Armenian Supreme Soviet, where nationalist-minded popular reformers play a prominent role.

However, Nagorno-Karabagh, and other regions in the Caucasus, in Uzbek, Tadzhik, and Turkmenia, remain occupied by central government troops and under martial law conditions to one degree or another. Such conditions, of course, severely restrict efforts toward mass self-organization; and in some cases, like those prevailing in Nagorno-Karabagh, all pretense of respecting democratic rights has been dropped.

The Uzbek youth interrupted their hunger strike while I was there, planning to resume it September 1—with the opening of the fall session of the Supreme Soviet.

The Uzbeks, Armenians, women, and the other victims of the ruling bureaucracy's criminal conspiracies and policies need support not only internationally but inside the USSR, from Russians as well as non-Russians, and from the Marxist, socialist, and workers' movements.

Growth of Independent Workers' and Socialist Movements

I met Vladimir Shurin, a coordinator of the newly organizing Confederation of Independent Trade Unions of Russia (CITUR), founded in Moscow in April 1990. Its founding conference, attended by 1,500 people from all the main Russian regions was prepared by the official All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions. Vladimir's office is in an official trade union building which seems to define how independent it can really be. The CITUR has adopted some organizational rules but the adoption of a political program will not occur until the next conference in September in Moscow, Vladimir said. He did not have any specific indications as to what it might be.

However, it certainly seems that the CITUR will aim to pull independent trade union and other working class activist groups into one controllable organization. Such independent activity has ballooned since the massive miners' strikes during the summer of 1989. Some of the organizations that have emerged are rather large, like the Confederation of Labor formed in early May 1990 in the Kuznetsk Basin, the Western Siberian coal mining region. It brought together activists from far-flung Russian and non-Russian regions and the coal miners' new independent union launched at a June conference of miners in the Donetsk region of Ukraine. Both are also scheduled to meet again later this year.

Among the smaller such groups Shurin mentioned were two in Leningrad that I met last year—"Justice" and "Independence" (see *Bulletin in Defense of Marxism* Nos. 67 and 76). Shurin reports that both have experienced growth and now have 300-400 members. Independence recruited, he said, 37 Vorkuta miners.

Independent trade unionists who quit the official union face hardships because most social benefits a worker receives from the state—housing, health care, vacation spots, various goods and services—are distributed through the official trade unions.

The New Socialist Party which was formed June 20-24 in Moscow includes activists who participated in both the Kuzbas and the Donetsk conferences. Of the 80 delegates who attended the founding conference, 60 actually stayed to launch the new party which now has sections in at least seven cities: Moscow, Leningrad, Irkutsk, Volgograd, Krasnodar, Odessa, and Samara (formerly Gorky). The founding conference took up mostly organizational questions. However, the party does have a 32-page program—only one paragraph of which dealt specifically with problems of women. Its page on the nationalities problem very generally supports self-determination for the non-Russian republics. But it seemed more concerned about the plight of Russian minorities in the non-Russian republics than with the multitude of social, economic, and political grievances of those who have suffered for decades under the Great-Russian chauvinism of Stalin and his heirs.

Hopefully its upcoming conference later this year will be more attentive to such specific and already vital issues. □

Discussion by Soviet Revolutionaries

We print below, for the information of our readers, some comments presented by a few participants in the August 18-19 Moscow conference organized by the Workers International to Rebuild the Fourth International (WIRFI). The text is reconstructed from notes taken by Marilyn Vogt-Downey. The speakers have had no opportunity to correct the transcription or edit their comments.

Dmitrii Zhvaniya (Leningrad)

I would like to ask a question. What are we talking about here? About the creation of a beautiful label? or a beautiful name? Or of the creation of a powerful revolutionary nucleus? I believe that those who came here for a beautiful label have already left. Those who decided to make from Trotskyism a toy have, I hope, been disillusioned. I believe that those who remain are those who want to create a powerful revolutionary nucleus. But even to make a powerful artillery shot fall where you want it, you need to go through an entire process.

A revolutionary party cannot be created overnight. It takes time. Now the revolutionary movement in the USSR is at the stage of tiny grouplets, and is outside the workers' movement. Those who consider themselves revolutionaries are trying to take part in the strike movement of the workers, are trying to participate in the workers' movement. But this is still not enough. The stage of tiny grouplets is a normal stage in the development of the future workers' party.

I will not here retell what Vladimir Ilyich Lenin said in his book *What Is To Be Done?* but all the same I would like to note something fundamental. It is that in order to create a party, you

have to create those cells upon which it will be constructed. Lev Davidovich Trotsky in a number of his works wrote about the so-called molecular work among the masses, of molecular work inside the proletariat, which is necessary for the creation of a revolutionary party.

Now this molecular work is only just beginning. We are only starting to join the workers' movement. But I am confident that while passing through this stage we will be able to create the first cells of the future party. Much depends precisely on us, precisely on those revolutionaries in the Soviet Union.

International links are the duty of anyone who considers himself a revolutionary, of this I do not want there to be any doubt. And therefore, first and most fundamental is to carry out the struggle for creation of a workers' party here in the USSR, which will struggle in the interest of the proletariat and unite the proletariat. To say that the idea of building a party as such is unpopular among the proletariat, this is nonsense. From my own experience participating in the workers' strikes, for example, recent strike groups in Leningrad, I can draw some conclusions as to whether the idea of a party is really unpopular among the proletariat. And what kind of party is unpopular? That type which in its program expresses a point of view in favor of the restoration of capitalism, petty bourgeois points of view like those held by the Confederation of Anarcho-Syndicalists and their comrades; social democratic parties of various hues; and the neo-Stalinists. And to those parties, the workers say "Get out of here!" And they are right in doing that.

But right now the proletariat does not have the party which could unite it.

Our duty—that is, the duty of those who consider themselves revolutionaries—is to conduct the practical work among the

proletariat which is necessary for the creation of such a party, work which will, in turn, lay the necessary foundation and create those cells, those mighty cells that will join the International.

One can, of course, create a nice label and unite anyone and everyone. Of course, there are many who would like to wear the thorny crown of the Fourth International. But how many of them are there who will actually be able to do it justice?

We can in this way advance from our own midst the most consistent revolutionary activists—who will go the whole way for the creation of a workers' revolutionary party.

Sergei Biets (Moscow)

Yesterday I spoke out against those from the USSR. Today I will scold our visitors from abroad. It would be totally wrong to think that we live here in such darkness that we don't know about the splits in the FI. To one or another degree we know the essentials about the splits and the differences: that the permanent revolution has been transformed into the permanent division.

I am far from familiar with all the programs. But there are people here who know much more about this. And what I know combined with what they know is enough to condemn you. You, with your splits and bickering, have wiped out the left. Trotsky was absolutely right when he said that the crisis of the world revolutionary movement is a crisis of revolutionary leadership. Everyone is trying to be the big fish in a small pond. Ambition, old grudges, this is what has led to the disunity of the Trotskyist movement.

You accuse the Argentinians because they allegedly united with the Stalinists. But when we came here yesterday, we saw who you yourself aspire to unite with here. From a look at those whom you gathered together I can form an opinion as to your own ideological purity.

I do not claim to be the most enlightened person either. I do not speak about this to accuse anyone of revisionism, or opportunism, or of any other departure from Marxism. I say this so you will understand that we don't need your Western splits here in the Soviet Union. We do not want to allow here the creation of an individual section of a revolutionary workers' party, a separate section of your organization, of the [British] Militant tendency, of the United Secretariat, or of anyone else. We don't need splits. The rebirth of the Fourth International lies through unification of all Trotskyist groups.

Until the mythical barriers to this unity are removed—the things dividing these organizations which are actually very close to one another in their views—until a real international workers' party is created, a united party that is not splintered over trifles, until then there can be no talk of any sort of international socialist revolution. Without this they have defeated us, they are defeating us now, and they will continue to defeat us.

“As long as we are reeling from the blows delivered by the right wing we will ally with people who are not Trotskyists at all in the USSR. And we will continue to argue with our Trotskyist comrades in the West”—that seems to be what the WIRFI is doing. Were we to adopt such methods it would be equivalent to sawing off the branch we are sitting on. Unless we understand that the only road to world revolution lies through the unity of all true revolutionary Marxists can we begin to talk about practical work.

Regarding the practical tasks, I would only say that if we really want to speak seriously about the rebirth of the Fourth International then we actually have a unique opportunity to organize a gathering in Moscow, on neutral ground—still untouched by your splits and your fights—an international conference of all Trotskyists so we can really examine what divides and what unites you.

I hope that the people present here, representing Western Trotskyism, will help make this possible. By doing so we will take a really serious step toward the rebirth of the Fourth International.

Vyacheslav Voinov, Historian (Orenburg)

I do not want to speak about problems connected with the international Trotskyist movement because these are very complicated. . . . But one previous speaker has stated that either we who consider ourselves Trotskyists must all unite or we must here and now disperse. But if we are to unite, then under what conditions? Who consider themselves Trotskyists and who will make the determination that they speak the truth? This is a very interesting question.

Who is a Trotskyist and who's not? The longer I live—and I am 32 years old—the harder it is for me to say for sure. One can stumble on this very simple question. Is one a Trotskyist or has one simply read Trotsky. Since I had access to the Special Archives in the course of my work, I read his writings. It is a rather difficult question—whether we should unite or divide, in the spirit of the preceding speaker. . . .

But from what he said yesterday we see one point of view about unity of Trotskyists in the USSR, and today something quite different about unity abroad. He is for the unification of all currents, or all groups—which I am also for in principle—but here in the USSR, he has a totally different point of view. Here, only the Trotskyists of his faith can unite, Trotskyists of his tendency, Trotskyists as he understands the term. But if we follow that line of thought, then there will certainly be others who consider themselves Trotskyists but don't consider him one and they will not let him join their group either.

Why can one think that abroad the Trotskyists should be united but that here, in the Soviet Union, this should not be the case?

Either one must say—and I cannot be sure this is true but it seems to be—either we must say that Trotskyists in the West have serious differences on one or another question and we must carry over these differences here, if we are to allegedly unite, or we support another position. Either we are differentiated here in the same way as they are abroad, or we have simple unity of all Trotskyists.

Aleksei Gusev (Moscow)

The discussion here has become sharp, perhaps too sharp. It has revolved fundamentally around the question of: what platform will form the basis of the Soviet section of the Fourth International? Who is really an authentic revolutionary Marxist and who is only calling himself that?

The true criterion, as we all know, is what is done in practice. Therefore, it is not only a theoretical question, but a practical one.

In connection with this, let us look at who is sitting here. We have here people who have organized our conference. That is, representatives of the WIRFI. And I believe that we must all express our gratitude to them for this alone—that they took upon themselves the burden of trying to consolidate the Trotskyists here in the USSR.

Now, of course, one may not precisely affirm that such a movement must defend the platform of that particular current. However, the workers' movement, the movement of revolutionary Marxists in the Soviet Union will determine what kind of organizations will participate in our movement—what organizations will collaborate with the Soviet Trotskyists and who will stand aside and which currents of the Fourth International deserve the name of genuine Marxists and genuine revolutionaries.

In connection with this idea I would all the same like to emphasize that it is necessary to be more scrupulous in our approach to the world Trotskyist movement. We must not make the same mistake as those who consider themselves Communists—there were many of those. . . . We need not unite simply because we consider ourselves Trotskyists. . . . I agree that in the future such unification will happen. But that is in the future. And it will be only those currents and forces who carry out work in the spirit of revolutionary Marxism and don't just talk about it.

Additional Comments by Alexei Gusev:

I share the opinion of Sergei that our international guests may have every reason to be disillusioned. The majority of those from the USSR who have spoken here have no connection of any kind with revolutionary Marxism or Trotskyism. They create the impression of being stupefied by the smell of Western sausage and they therefore try in every way possible to prove this feeble idea: that before workers will struggle for socialism they will have to partake of the goods of so-called civilization, with all its capitalist delights. These are well known to all our foreign guests but, unfortunately, are only vaguely understood by our own liberals—who make their judgments about Western society from the covers of illustrated journals and apologetic literature, published with the funds of the capitalists themselves.

But as far back as 1938, in the Transitional Program of the Fourth International, Trotsky wrote that the Soviet Union will be able to partake in Western civilization, more likely than not, only in its fascist form. Today, we are seeing the proof of this assumption insofar as some apologists for capitalist restructuring speak of the need to establish a strict dictatorship in order to put their reforms into practice. And they are absolutely right, because anti-democratic and antipopular reforms cannot be implemented through democratic means. Yeltsin and the others can speak all they want about their love for democracy, the people, freedom, etc. But the result of their actions can only be popular indignation, which will lead either to a social revolution of the workers or to the establishment of a dictatorship of the bureaucracy and the bourgeoisie.

And now, to be more concrete, a few words about our meeting today.

Trotsky once wrote that mystics and Pythagoreans will be able to find in the story of his life much that is interesting because his birthday was on the day of the October revolution, and he was born in the same year as his archenemy Stalin. Today we can say the same thing. We are marking the fiftieth anniversary of the day of the vile murder of Trotsky with the rebirth of the Trotskyist revolutionary movement in the USSR. And this is as it should be. It had to happen sooner or later; it is taking place and will continue.

Trotsky's final words were "I believe in the victory of the Fourth International." Today we can say with confidence that these words were a prophecy and that they will be realized sooner or later.

The collapse of Stalinism today is obvious. But a capitalist alternative to Stalinism will hardly be acceptable to the Soviet workers. The free market, competition, and other attributes of capitalism will leave us in the situation of a Sudan or Bangladesh, where all these factors dominate the lives of people. And the living standards in these places is much lower than ours.

There exists another alternative to Stalinism toward which the entire workers' movement, and the movements of all who labor, will lead without fail. This is toward the resolution of our economic, political, and social problems through self-rule, workers' democracy, planned administration, and international solidarity. It will happen; but we must not wait until it becomes a reality. We must help to make it happen. And it can only be done by the Fourth International and its Soviet section.

Today, in our country, you can call yourself a monarchist or a fascist or whatever you want, as long as it's not a Trotskyist because it was precisely Trotsky who was discredited throughout the past decades. And he continues to be discredited today by the new bosses. Our first task is to expose what could be called this second assassination of Trotsky.

Our second task, relying on Trotsky's methodology, is to develop a genuine socialist program that corresponds to the class interests of workers—of all who labor. Our third task is to organize the workers on the basis of this program. The fourth task is the organization of fully empowered committees of workers in all enterprises which must become the fundamental organs of power. These organs will allow neither the bureaucratic command system nor capitalist privatization.

Precisely toward the goal of completing these four tasks must the international solidarity of all revolutionary Marxist forces be focused, because socialism can be achieved only through the common efforts of the workers of all countries. It is conceivable only as a worldwide system.

In connection with this, the existence of divisions within the Western Trotskyist movement is a very sad fact. To be victorious, we must unite—in the Western countries as well as in the USSR.

If we are able to complete these tasks, we will win.

If we are able to accomplish our historic tasks, then instead of the power of bureaucratic orders or the dictatorship of the capitalist market, there will be genuine socialist relations where the dominant force will be neither bureaucratic power nor the ruble. It will be socialist relations, relations based on self-rule by freely associated labor.

Long live socialism!

Long live the international workers party of the Fourth International!

Thank you. □

Fourth International Youth Camp—1990

by Tammy Hall

It was my first trip to Europe. For an African-American woman, reared in rural Tennessee, attending the 1990 International Festival of Youth of the Fourth International in Belgium was the event of a lifetime. Never in my wildest dreams would I have seen myself there.

The camp was well named. Over 20 countries were represented. In my sleeping quarters there were young men and women from the United States, the Soviet Union, Poland, West Germany, and France. The Polish girls were my favorites. We laughed a lot together and admired each other's clothes and customs in spite of the language barrier.

Presentations, classes, and discussions were held throughout the week. People reported on the political, economic, and social struggles in their countries. There was a general meeting in the morning. Around two o'clock sessions took place specifically on women's issues. At four we could choose which of six classes on a variety of world issues we wished to attend. Then a class on the basic elements of Marxism was held at six. Simultaneous translations into several languages took place at all sessions and classes.

My favorite was the general meeting at ten each morning, with two or three speakers, including a keynote speaker. At these morning sessions we each had a set of headphones to receive translations. They were held in a huge, bright-red vinyl tent, with seven or eight hundred youth gathered together. At any moment some particular group might spontaneously break out into chants, songs, and applause. During one of these lively occasions I thought to myself: how real this is. Oppressed and working people from different parts of the world coming together, crossing language and cultural barriers to share ideas and gain mutual encouragement as we face struggles for a better world. How provoking it was to hear the Polish comrades' true feelings about Walesa and his betrayals; to be inspired by the Sandinista youth as they spoke about the steadfastness of the Nicaraguan people; to listen to a tongue different from mine speak of Malcolm X; to experience the fall of the wall through the eyes of an East German; to hear a Black

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by Lisa Landphair

Imagine a congregation of nearly 800 revolutionary Marxists in the heart of Western Europe. Then, consider that they come from all over the world. Finally, factor in the median age (around 19). The excitement, intensity, and sense of solidarity is palpable!

Celebrating its seventh year, the International Festival of Youth, or the International Camp of Young Revolutionaries as the Portuguese put it, was, in my view, the most thrilling and inspiring world event during the week of July 21-29. Massive numbers of delegates, ranging in age from 13 to 32, descended on De Kluis in Sint Joris Weert, Belgium, southeast of Brussels and the site of this year's camp.

Member organizations and guests of the Fourth International representing over 20 countries met and mingled in the spirit of socialism. Attendees traveled from as near as France, Belgium, Switzerland, England, Ireland, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Holland, Denmark, and Sweden; and as far as Greece, Palestine, South Africa, Mexico, and Nicaragua. There were five of us from the U.S. It was unusual, and interesting, as Americans to be the minority for a change. Busloads of Czechs, Poles, and Soviets, as well as individuals from Hungary and East Germany (East Berlin) arrived for the first time, contributing to the camp theme of "East-West relations."

The camp was organized and operated by the youths and their committees. The daily structure was loose—just enough. Each day officially began at 10:00 a.m. with a general meeting (with full translation into six or seven languages) on a variety of political topics. All together, under the tent, cultural differences faded and a bond of shared struggle and hope would burst forth in spirited and contagious songs of protest—including the *International* in beautifully foreign tongues. It was electric and poignant.

In addition to Eastern European participation, another first at this year's camp was a gay/lesbian-only space. As in previous years, a women's space and a women's day featured workshops on issues like violence and aggression against women. There were meetings for women each afternoon.

(Continued on next page)

by Keith Mann

Nearly 800 young people from over 20 countries participated in the seventh annual youth camp of the Fourth International. This year's festival was held at a camp site near Louvain, Belgium, during the week of July 21-29.

The importance that the Fourth International and its youth groups attach to the crisis of Stalinism, the possibilities for the advancement of socialist democracy, and the dangers of capitalist restoration, all of which characterize the upheavals in Eastern Europe over the last year, was reflected in the theme of this year's camp: the meeting of revolutionary youth from East and West. In fact, a stated goal of the camp was to bring the ideas of the Fourth International to the workers' movement of the bureaucratized workers' states of Eastern Europe.

The new openings for the exchange of information and ideas between East and West Europe allowed the camp organizers to secure the participation of 105 young people who travelled from the USSR, Eastern Europe, Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia. In the relaxed atmosphere of the camp these young people—all of whom were born and raised in postcapitalist, Stalinized societies—came into contact with Trotskyist ideas. They found an international Marxist organization that champions the struggle of workers and the oppressed, not only in the imperialist countries, but those fighting Stalinist dictatorships and colonial regimes in the third world as well. A representative of the newly formed South African Workers' Organization for Socialist Action and members of the Sandinista youth from Nicaragua and the Revolutionary Workers Party (Mexican section of the Fourth International) were among the international guests from beyond Europe.

For the past two years the Fourth Internationalist Tendency has been represented at the youth camp. This year three representatives from the FIT and two from Solidarity made up the delegation from the United States. Participants at a workshop led by the FIT on social struggles in this country were interested in the current political scene as well as more general questions such as the attitude of

(Continued on next page)

Tammy Hall

South African praise Nelson Mandela's courage. It was really something to be part of that.

From every angle, the festival was a rich cultural event. Films shown each night featured struggles in various parts of the world, usually dealing with workers, immigrants, and other oppressed peoples. And before the film was shown, discussion of the one from the previous evening took place.

One of the buildings located down the hill and through the woods housed the revolutionary bookstore. It was an incredible collection of books and pamphlets from all corners of the globe.

Located next to the tent where the general sessions were held was another

huge tent. Here there was a large camp bar. Postcards, T-shirts, buttons, art, etc. were also on sale. We would gather here throughout the day to socialize, have a drink, eat, and just simply hang out.

For all of us the festival was a learning experience, but we played as well—soccer games during the day and dancing all night. There was a live disc jockey and we kept the bar very busy. The music was usually loud '60s-style rock, but every now and then James Brown or Janet Jackson would slip in there somehow.

Wednesday was designated as women's day. The emphasis of most sessions and classes was on women's issues. At the end of the day a celebration was held in a large white stone structure called the women's space, located in the woods. For part of the entertainment different groups performed

skits. One, by some French comrades, was done in mime, with dramatic Italian music playing in the background. It was about the trouble a young woman was having trying to get an abortion, and was done so well that our language barriers completely disappeared. We laughed and responded in unison.

Later one of the Mexican sisters gave a talk about women and abortion in Mexico. A German sister translated the Spanish to German, another translated from German to French, another from French to English, and lastly the English was translated into Italian. I thought of the slogan "Workers of the World Unite" and wished, at that moment, that more of my African-American sisters could be present. For me the camp was an unforgettable experience, and I look forward to returning in future years. □

Lisa Landphair

The highlight of each day was the 4:00 p.m. workshop. There were five or six to choose from, so it was smart to divide one's delegation in order to attend the maximum number of presentations, and then pow-wow at a later time to share information. Workshops were conducted by nearly every country present. They were an invaluable opportunity to hear firsthand about experiences and developments in countries like the Soviet Union, Nicaragua, Mexico, Czechoslovakia, etc. For example, who outside of Poland would know that not only is a woman's right to abortion endangered, but that there are rumors of

rescinding her right to vote as well? Our U.S. delegation presented a workshop with more than 80 in attendance. There was much interest in the labor, pro-choice, anti-intervention, and Afro-American movements. Following the workshops, at 6:00, basic classes in Marxism were held each evening under the big tent.

This daily schedule was punctuated by delegation meetings, which were occasions to prepare agendas, exchange information and ideas obtained from various camp experiences, and for individuals from other countries to share their views and ask questions specific to that delegation. (For example, a comrade from Belfast hosted an informal, mini-educational during one of

these periods.) Nights offered music, dancing, film and video, and campfires. One evening there was a rally for solidarity with Central America. Calls for international solidarity throughout the week were felt and expressed most strongly here as everyone thundered "Nicaragua, Sandinista!" Personal accounts by FSLN members of the sorrow and yet perseverance of Nicaraguans provoked tears from many listeners.

The festival culminated with a talk by Ernest Mandel. I, however, had already left to pursue other enriching European adventures. Still, I plan to be back for more next summer. □

Keith Mann

Trotskyists toward the question of a labor party in the U.S. Many had heard of the recent split of the Socialist Workers Party from the Fourth International and wanted to hear our views about the prospects for reconstructing a U.S. sympathizing section of the FI.

The daily morning sessions of the camp were devoted to themes which reflected the big issues of world politics today, the internationalism of the FI, as well as the European focus of the camp. The subjects

of the five weekday morning sessions were: Eastern Europe; their Europe and ours: 1992; women's struggle; disarmament and peace; and third world debt and struggles.

The Young Socialist Guards (JGS), the revolutionary socialist organization of Flemish and French speaking youth in solidarity with the Belgian section of the FI, did an exemplary job of organizing all aspects of the camp, from meals and sleeping arrangements to cultural and recreational events, and the considerable task of translating the scores of languages spoken

at the camp. The big majority of classes, forums, and workshops were conducted by the youth delegations themselves, though members of the United Secretariat led Marxist education classes and some workshops in areas in which they specialized. FI leader Ernest Mandel was the featured speaker at the final meeting.

The serious and optimistic dedication to the struggle for a socialist future of the revolutionary socialist youth gathered in the Belgian countryside last July makes them the best of their generation. □

show how the SWP leadership functioned during this period. Barnes's report, which rejects the perspective of a working class-led revolution in South Africa today, was discussed and approved by the SWP National Committee in August 1985—*immediately following the close of a party convention*. Despite the importance of this issue, the delegates to that convention were not given an opportunity to discuss and decide the matter. It was not until this year that Barnes's line on South Africa was formally presented to the delegates of a party convention for their approval—after five years in which it was promoted without any real opportunity for discussion or dissent.

For the Reconstitution of Fourth Internationalist Movement in the United States

The new orientation approved by the FIT conference delegates calls for a concerted effort to reunite those in the United States who remain loyal to the program and organization of the Fourth International. It projects a future U.S. sympathizing section as coming from such a reunification, combined with new activists who can continue to be won to the program of international Trotskyism.

The SWP will remain an important organization that revolutionary Marxists in this country will have to pay close attention to. The FIT's turn does not mean abandoning that task. The history and traditions of the party, the continuing membership of a significant cadre that was originally educated in the Trotskyist school, its continued recruitment of revolutionary-minded workers and youth, mean that there remain individuals and groups within the SWP that can be won (or won back) to the perspectives of revolutionary Marxism. But the FIT no longer considers

it realistic to hope that *the SWP as a whole* can reform itself. A new revolutionary organization will have to be constructed in this country if we are to succeed in our historic tasks.

Conference delegates understood that significant obstacles stand in the way of achieving this goal of a reunified movement. At the present time those who were expelled from the SWP as part of the Barnes leadership's purge are regrouped in three separate organizations. One is the FIT. In addition, there is Socialist Action, which also maintains fraternal ties to the FI. And a significant group of fraternal FI members are part of Solidarity, although that organization as a whole has no ties with the FI.

Each of the three groups—the FIT, Socialist Action, and Solidarity—has had a different perspective on how to build a revolutionary organization in the U.S. We have had substantial differences on our approach to specific events in the international and U.S. class struggle. Each of the three currents of Fourth Internationalists has gone through its own experience since the expulsions, and each has recruited new members who were never part of our common experience inside the SWP. Perhaps most importantly, each of the three currents drew different conclusions about the history and functioning of the SWP as a result of the party's degeneration. All of this shaped our different political and organizational perspectives.

The problems that flow from these differences will have to be faced squarely. They will not be quickly or easily overcome. But FIT conference delegates were of the opinion that the overwhelming objective need for a reunification of our forces requires each of the three currents to do everything it can to advance us in the direction of a reunited movement in the U.S. (See statement adopted by the National Organizing Committee of the FIT on page 1.)

Opposing Viewpoints

There were two alternative viewpoints at the conference which received a small number of votes. One called for a reaffirmation of the FIT's previous orientation for the reform of the SWP as the proper party-building strategy for revolutionary Marxists in the U.S. today. The second projected a faster process of fusion with the other currents than the majority thought was realistic. This second current asserted that the existing differences between the groups could be best overcome through the normal process of discussion and experience that would take place in a united Leninist organization.

However, Paul Le Blanc, reporting for the majority, noted that the existence of three

organized currents of Fourth Internationalists, rather than two, made it quite impractical to think of carrying out any proposal for short-term fusion. There have been extremely strained relations between Socialist Action and the Fourth Internationalists in Solidarity, as well as problems between each of these groups and the FIT. Without a change in this situation it is unrealistic to think that a united organization can be quickly brought into existence.

Other Conference Decisions

In line with its new perspective of rebuilding a united U.S. sympathizing section of the FI in this country, delegates to the conference also approved a number of tasks designed to strengthen the FIT and its contribution to the revolutionary Marxist movement in the U.S. These include a maintenance of activity in all aspects of the U.S. class struggle—including a pledge to become centrally involved in the newly developing movement against U.S. intervention in the Middle East (see motion approved by the delegates, printed on p. 2)—a recruitment drive, a subscription drive to the *Bulletin in Defense of Marxism*, the formation of an FIT speaker's bureau, and the publication of a three-volume set documenting essential aspects of the history of our struggle over the last ten years. These books are to be titled *In Defense of American Trotskyism*, and at least one volume is projected to be ready in time for the February 1991 world congress of the FI. A special fund drive was approved to raise \$7,500 in order to cover the cost of their publication. (See box on this page for information on how to contribute to the fund.)

Delegates also discussed a political resolution that had been prepared by the FIT national coordinators before the conference. It was decided to continue discussion on the draft of that document by publishing it in a future issue of this magazine, inviting comment from our readers. After a period of three to six months the resolution will be voted on by the FIT's National Organizing Committee and worked into final form. Under the international agenda point, delegates discussed the FIT's attitude toward documents proposed for the upcoming world congress of the FI, as well as differences and questions that have arisen within our organization on recent events in Nicaragua and Eastern Europe.

In addition to the delegates and other FIT members present, more than one-half of those who registered for the conference were invited guests. Three asked to join the FIT and were taken into membership by the delegates. This added to the growth—approximately 20 percent—that the organization had already registered in the previous year. Fourth Internationalists from other countries, along with representatives from Socialist Action and Solidarity, attended the sessions and participated in conference discussions. □

In Defense of American Trotskyism

Contribute to the publication of this important, three-volume set, documenting the struggle to defend the historic program of the SWP during the 1980s. \$7,500 needs to be raised.

- **Make checks to:** FIT (Note that it is for the special publications fund.)
- **Send contributions to:** FIT, PO Box 1947, New York, NY 10009.

Appeal to Members of the Socialist Workers Party

From the National Organizing Committee of the
Fourth Internationalist Tendency.

On June 10, five leaders of the Socialist Workers Party signed a very brief letter announcing: "Effective today, each of our organizations terminates its affiliation, fraternal or statutory, to the Fourth International." Addressed to the International Executive Committee of the FI, the letter was also signed by leaders of the Communist Leagues of Australia, Britain, Canada, Iceland, New Zealand, and Sweden. The motivation behind the break is offered in one vague sentence: "As expressed through political work, internationalist collaboration, and our place within communist continuity and tradition, our parties have become organizations separate from the Fourth International."

This separation from the only existing revolutionary Marxist international comes on the eve of a World Congress and after more than half a century of involvement. It is alien to the SWP's own traditions—those of Lenin, Trotsky, Cannon, and others in the revolutionary Marxist movement—to turn the party's back on over fifty years of commitment with barely a line of explanation. The norm among serious Marxists is to draw up a balance sheet on such an experience, giving a clear account of the lessons learned and how these lessons provide reasons for a fundamentally new orientation. An objective balance sheet would show that many of the SWP's greatest achievements came from its fraternal participation in our world movement.

The SWP was among the founding parties of the Fourth International in 1938. In collaboration with Leon Trotsky, the party's leaders helped develop its founding programmatic document, *The Transitional Program*. In 1940, reactionary U.S. legislation was passed which forced the party to sever its statutory membership in the FI and establish a fraternal affiliation, but there was no withdrawal of the SWP's commitment to our world movement. During the war years of the 1940s, when the revolutionary Marxist movement in Europe was decimated by repression from both the fascists and the Stalinists, the work of the SWP was instrumental in maintaining the continuity of the FI and helping its underground

cadre in Europe to survive. After the war, the SWP played a crucial role in helping to rebuild the FI.

At every important juncture during the difficult years of the 1950s, '60s, and '70s, the SWP was active, and at times decisive, in the life of our world movement, including as part of the 1963 reunification of the FI after its split in the 1950s, and in the discussion on guerrilla warfare in Latin America during the late 1960s and early '70s.

Today the Fourth International is the only revolutionary current on a world scale that includes real national organizations from every continent, helping to advance the class struggles in their own countries and fighting for socialism. Whatever criticisms one might make of the FI, the fact remains that its cadres are active in combatting vote fraud and disappearances in Mexico, in building the Workers' Party in Brazil, in the French anti-racist movement and the British anti-poll tax protests, in the fight for socialist democracy in Eastern Europe, in the struggles against apartheid in South Africa, against Zionist oppression in Palestine, against the colonial subjugation in Northern Ireland, and in many other struggles of working people, of women, among oppressed nationalities, peasants, etc.

At the World Congress, which will take place in February 1991, crucial political questions will be discussed and debated by revolutionaries from Africa, Asia, the Middle East, Western and Eastern Europe, Latin America, North America, and other areas. The SWP could have presented its views as part of this rich exchange between Marxist activists from around the world. But instead of participating in this broader arena, the SWP leadership has chosen to pursue collaboration with a handful of small groups located almost exclusively in imperialist and English-speaking countries. Although the original projection for a new international included the Cuban revolutionaries, neither Fidel Castro nor the Cuban Communist Party has indicated any interest in calling for or helping to create such a new world organization.

The decision to sever the fraternal ties between the SWP and the FI represents a serious blow to our world movement—especially in view of the SWP's key role in the past, and the importance of the U.S. class struggle to the world revolution. The loss to the SWP will be extremely serious as well, as it becomes increasingly isolated from revolutionary Marxists across the world. History has already recorded the disastrous evolution of other groups which made similar decisions to "go it alone" with narrow currents of international cothinkers. Consider what happened with the Healyites in Britain, the Lambertists in France, or the Morenoites in Argentina.

The SWP membership has the right to receive fuller information about the situation in the Fourth International, and to know about the exciting new opportunities opened up by the collapse of the Stalinist regimes and the revitalization of revolutionary activities in Eastern Europe and the USSR, and the current struggles in China. The party ranks have the right to raise serious questions about the international perspectives now projected. We appeal to you to undertake this effort for your own integrity as revolutionaries, as internationalists, and as working class activists. Your future and that of the SWP are at stake.

We urge all members of the Socialist Workers Party to oppose the course of breaking from our world movement. We urge each of you to remain with us as part of the Fourth International. □

July 29, 1990

Open Letter to Jack Barnes

by Ben Stone

Dear Comrade Barnes:

On July 29, 1990, I went to the Socialist Workers Party New York branch at 191 Seventh Avenue to attend the memorial meeting in honor of Reba Hansen, an old friend and comrade. I was barred at the door and told it was a "closed" meeting. I protested that a public ad had appeared in the *Militant*. The security guard replied, "Sorry, it's a closed meeting." Closed to whom? I told the guard that I was there to pay my respects to Reba. It was to no avail. I left muttering to myself. I was outraged.

I put 21 years of my life into building the SWP, and after retiring spent more years as an active supporter of the party. From 1986 to 1988 I helped out in the bookstore at least one day a week. I don't think I deserved this kind of shabby treatment. But then I guess I shouldn't have been too surprised in view of the harsher treatment you meted out to comrades like George Breitman, George Weissman, Frank Lovell, Jimmy Kutcher, and a host of others.

The last time we met I believe was in 1983 when you were gracious enough to let me interview you and Mary-Alice Waters for a couple of hours. You will recall that I needed some background material for my forthcoming book, *The Memoirs of a Radical Rank and Filer*. I planned to include in the book some material on the transition in leadership from Dobbs to Barnes. I was very pleased with the interview (which I taped), and with the carte blanche which you gave me in obtaining any of the materials that I needed for the book. At this time I respected and admired you for your undeniable leadership qualities.

As an active supporter I also had access to the internal bulletins and I was able to follow the debate which was shaping up between the majority and minority on the question of Trotsky's theory of the permanent revolution. On this question I was particularly struck by Steve Clark's article which appeared in the 1981 pre-convention discussion bulletin. He answered a question raised by Nat Weinstein: "Is the Political Committee rethinking the correctness of the permanent revolution?" by giving a ringing defense of that theory. When I attended the 1981 convention and the 1983 educational conference, I was fully on the side of the majority.

I may have my dates mixed up but I believe it was at the 1985 educational conference that I attended a class by Steve Clark on permanent revolution. I took the floor and challenged Clark on why he had made a 180-degree turn after the 1981 pre-convention discussion and why he had never informed the party about his change of mind. Clark answered the first part of the question but not the second. He said that it was the Nicaraguan revolution that made him change his mind. He didn't explain what it was about the Nicaraguan revolution that made him change his mind.

When I had the floor I also asked about the letter left by Adolf Joffe when he committed suicide in which he stated that he had heard Lenin say that Trotsky was right about permanent revolution. In his response, Clark denied that Lenin was referring to permanent revolution, but a rereading of Deutscher's biography of Trotsky leaves no doubt: "He [Joffe] had heard Lenin himself saying this and admitting that not he but Trotsky had been right in the old controversies over permanent revolution." (*The Prophet Unarmed*, p. 382)

Somewhere around 1983 your lengthy article on "Their Trotsky and Ours" came out in the first edition of the *New International*. Needless to say, I was flabbergasted that you, who had been

mentored by Farrell Dobbs and Joe Hansen, should now be disparaging Trotsky and the theory of permanent revolution. But what shattered me altogether was when I learned that comrades who had spent their entire adult lives loyally serving the party were summarily expelled on completely frivolous charges—like not being willing to sign a statement repudiating the action of others before they had any information about it. Then I knew I had to do something.

At first I talked to a number of comrades in the party about the expulsions but they clammed up whenever I broached the subject. As mentioned before, I asked my question of Steve Clark at the 1985 SWP educational conference and I later took the floor at a New York Militant Labor Forum, when Doug Jenness spoke on "Lenin's Unfinished Fight." I asked how it was possible for him to speak for an hour about Lenin's struggle against Stalin and bureaucratism in the USSR without mentioning the name of Trotsky. Jenness responded by saying that I had made a "useful contribution"!

I remember attending a meeting of active supporters where Barry Sheppard made a presentation on the relationship of forces in the radical movement. During the question period I asked if there could ever be a reunification of the forces in this country pledging allegiance to the Fourth International. Barry answered emphatically: "No." Now Barry finds himself one of those shunned by the party. After leaving, he was denied even the status of an active supporter.

While I was an active supporter I never hid the fact that I sympathized with the expelled and that I would do whatever I could to achieve a reunification. Yet I was permitted to attend forums and meetings, until now.

If you really feel that some principle of political integrity requires that you keep someone like myself from attending a memorial meeting for Reba Hansen this demonstrates how far the SWP has come from the party I knew during the years in which I was an active member. Somewhere along the line the question for me became, how could I best help to stop the degeneration of the party, to reverse the trend of theoretical revisionism and organizational liquidationism. I investigated the organizations of the expelled opposition and, after a long hesitation, joined the Fourth Internationalist Tendency.

The central orientation of the FIT has been, since its foundation, to rebuild a united, sympathizing section of the Fourth International in the United States through the readmission of all the expelled and a full and democratic discussion and decision concerning our differences. With your recent departure from the Fourth International we will now have to find another way to rebuild a revolutionary Marxist party in this country. But while the SWP has been in a prolonged process of crisis and decline for more than a decade, all of the organizations formed by those you expelled have strengthened themselves and grown in numbers.

Our prospects for the future linked to the Fourth International, a genuine international party with a revolutionary Marxist program and perspectives, are bright. Yours become increasingly dim. Gradually you are stamping out any shred of revolutionary integrity that might be left in your organization. The act of denying me, and other members of the FIT and Socialist Action, the right to attend Reba's memorial meeting was just one more small step in the process by which you are relentlessly destroying the Socialist Workers Party.

August 8, 1990

Inquiry from a reader:

'Why Does the SWP Still Exclude the FIT from Its Bookstores and Public Events?'

Dear *Bulletin in Defense of Marxism*:

I recently spoke to a member of the SWP and asked a question that has been on my mind for some time: Why does the SWP still exclude the FIT from its bookstores and public events? The reply perplexed me. It was something about the FIT being a bunch of thieves. I asked for further clarification, but the individual I was speaking to didn't seem too clear on things. I gather that it has to do with letters and articles by James P. Cannon, but she could not really explain it. Her hostile attitude made me a bit reluctant to press the matter with other party members.

Can you enlighten me as to what this is all about? I remember that back when you were first expelled from the SWP you and Socialist Action, and later the comrades who formed Solidarity, were excluded from party headquarters on the grounds that you claimed to be a public faction, and the party leadership thought that was a violation of their security. But I thought that had all been resolved. What's the story now?

An old-time Trotskyist

The *Bulletin in Defense of Marxism* Replies:

The reason that the SWP member you spoke to had trouble explaining the party's present policy is probably that the policy makes little sense. You are basically correct about the "public faction" dispute. The SWP leadership asserted that because this characterization was used by Socialist Action (neither we nor the comrades who went on to form Solidarity ever actually called ourselves a "public faction") the legal status of the SWP was placed in jeopardy. To defend itself, to clearly show that it took no political or legal responsibility for what we did, it was "forced" to exclude us from its headquarters.

In our view this whole line of argument had little, if any, legitimacy. Nevertheless, we agreed—along with the other groups of expelled SWP members—to take the concerns of the party leadership at face value. To satisfy them, statements were published in our respective journals back in 1985 on this and other questions. The SWP leadership had agreed that if we printed these statements they would lift the ban against our members attending public party functions.

For a period of time the exclusion policy was, in fact, lifted against SA and Fourth Internationalists in Solidarity. (Recently it has been reimposed against SA because the SWP has begun a new slander campaign against that organization, claiming that they are "finks," based on the public circulation by SA of a document published by Malik Miah after his expulsion from the party.) But the ban against the FIT was never lifted, and continues in force to this day.

The purported basis for continuing the ban against us has been an allegation that George Breitman refused to return archival material by James P. Cannon to the Library of Social History at West Street. Breitman did take home copies of items on file in the library's Cannon archives, but he did so with permission of the library and the leadership of the SWP while he was still a member of the party in order to do historical research. There was no discussion at the time that these papers were only on loan.

Almost two years after his expulsion from the SWP, however, Breitman received a letter demanding that he return these and other materials. In a detailed reply, dated February 13, 1986, he stated that he had nothing from the Library of Social History in his possession that did not also remain among the library's papers—since he had only taken copies home. He considered that this was historical material of general interest to the movement, not the private proprietary concern of the SWP or the Library of Social History. He had promised previous leaders of the party that he would use this material in writing about the early days of the movement in the U.S., and he planned to fulfill that commitment. Unfortunately, he died before he was able to do so.

After Breitman's death the SWP continued to pursue the question of the Cannon archives. It then declared that this was the basis for the continuation of the exclusion policy against the FIT. Even though no "security" question was involved, as there supposedly had been with the "public faction" dispute, it was necessary to punish the FIT in some way for the refusal to hand over this material.

In response, the FIT leadership proposed a number of steps—including comparing the Cannon material in Breitman's archives with an index of the material in the Library for Social History so that any letters and documents he had collected from other sources, which the library might not have, could be added to the library's collection. But all of our suggestions for an amicable resolution of the problem which would have been to the mutual benefit of the FIT and SWP were rejected. The party leadership would not budge from its formal position that Cannon materials which had been in Breitman's possession were the private property of the Library of Social History. The failure to "return" them constitutes the basis for the charge against the FIT that the SWP member repeated to you.

As far as we are concerned, any historical documentation of this type should be freely available to the workers' movement as a whole—without regard to factionalism or tendency disputes. The attitude of the SWP leadership reveals a thoroughly petty-bourgeois, shopkeeper mentality. No project they might have to study or publish this material by Cannon is jeopardized by the FIT or anyone else also having copies. But, given the factional hostility of the SWP to the FIT, other expelled party members, and even the general left in this country, our agreeing to surrender such material to them would effectively exclude us from the possibility of using it even for our own study and education. We have therefore rejected giving in to their political blackmail. ("Give us what we demand or else we will continue to exclude you from our bookstores and events.")

It is more than likely that the real stimulus for this whole affair was the publication at the initiation of the FIT, in 1986, of a little pamphlet called *Don't Strangle the Party* which contained letters by Cannon on party organization. Anyone who reads this pamphlet will understand immediately that the Barnes leadership of the SWP is falsifying the historical record when it claims that their purge of the opposition during 1982-84 was in the best organizational tradition of the SWP and of Cannon. Having bureaucratically undermined the key organizational and political traditions of Cannon's party—while falsely claiming to act in his name—they would be more than happy to have all of his still unpublished letters and other papers locked away where access to them is controlled, not freely available to the FIT or others who have a genuine interest in continuing the tradition of Cannon in the USA. □

Jake Cooper (1916-1990)

Jake Cooper, a founder of the Socialist Workers Party and the youngest of the 18 socialists and unionists convicted in the 1941 Minneapolis Smith Act trials, died Saturday, September 8, in a hospital near his home in Chaska, Minnesota.

He had suffered a stroke on Labor Day, September 3, and lapsed shortly afterward into a coma from which he never recovered.

Jake was born in St. Paul, and shortly afterward his parents, who had emigrated from the Ukraine, moved to Chaska, a small river town near Minneapolis, where they opened a store in one of the rooms of their home.

Jake grew up and went to high school in Chaska, and spent the majority of his life there. As the only Jewish family in a German Catholic community, the Coopers suffered prejudice and discrimination for many years. Goldie, Jake's older sister, moved to Chicago in 1929 where she met and married Max Goldman, a member of the Communist League of America (the name of the American Trotskyist organization at that time). Goldie introduced the ideas of the CLA to her brothers and sisters, and Jake joined the CLA Minneapolis branch in 1933.

Jake remained a committed Trotskyist and revolutionary socialist for the rest of his life. In 1982 he was expelled from the Socialist Workers Party along with his lifelong comrade Harry DeBoer, as a part of the purge of Trotskyists from the SWP carried out by the Barnes leadership of the party.

When Socialist Action was formed the following year, he and his brother Dave, who had also been expelled from the SWP, joined SA. Jake was elected to SA's National Committee.

The CLA's Minneapolis branch in 1933 included V.R. Dunne and Carl Skoglund, who became the central leaders of the 1934 Minneapolis truck drivers' strikes. Although still only in high school, Jake participated in the party's activities in support of the strike. Later he became a fulltime organizer for Minneapolis Teamster Local 544, as it built on its 1934 victory and drove ahead to make Minneapolis a union town.

He was a crucial component of 544's staff of organizers, whose revolutionary commitment, street-fighting skills, and physical courage (even in his seventies Jake was a strong, athletic, and physically formidable

individual) made them the union's strong right arm, as 544 was forced to battle gangsters, cops, and Stalinists who all at different times utilized physical force against the union. He fought shoulder to shoulder with comrades and fellow workers such as Harry DeBoer, Ray Rainbolt, Emil Hansen, Clarence Hamel, Jack Maloney, and others.

Jake's tenacity, determination, and single-mindedness was such that, according to Harry DeBoer, he earned the nickname "One Track." Those who knew him in later life found this story entirely credible.

One story Jake told on himself on occasion. He was part of a squad dispatched from the union hall to the site of a scab construction operation near the Parade Grounds in Minneapolis. In the ensuing confrontation Jake opened the door of a scab truck and pulled out the driver. An altercation followed in which the driver's jaw was broken, and Jake was arrested. His immediate concern, however, was not the arrest, but that he might be charged with felony possession of a certain implement the organizers sometimes carried for self-defense. Jake was promptly brought before a judge, charged with assault. His mind was focused on demonstrating as clearly as possible that such a weapon had not figured in the fight.

"Mr. Cooper," the judge asked, "what were your actions towards Mr. Jones?" Mr. Jones had not been able to testify much, since his jaw was wired shut. "Your Honor," Jake said, "I hit him with a terrific left hook!" "Guilty!" said the judge. Jake was let off with a fine, which the union paid. When he arrived back at 544 headquarters, he said he was roundly derided for conducting union business in full view of the police department.

In 1940 Jake was asked to take a leave from his assignment as organizer for 544 and go to Mexico to join the guard at Trotsky's home in Coyoacán. This was, at the time, and forever afterward, one of the high points in his life. Jake spoke often, and eloquently, of his impressions of the "Old Man." He especially emphasized Trotsky's modest and undemanding relations with the household staff, secretaries, and guards. Jake was deeply impressed by the fact that this historic figure treated the other members of the household as valued friends and comrades, not as aides and servants.

During and after the murderous attack on Trotsky's home by Mexican Stalinists in May 1940, Jake was again powerfully impressed, this time by Trotsky's coolness and courage under fire. "He was absolutely fearless," Jake said.

After the tragic assassination in August, Jake returned to Minneapolis and the staff of 544. The battle for the streets and loading docks of Minneapolis took a qualitative turn as Teamster general president Daniel Tobin poured hundreds of his goons, including future Teamster president Jimmy Hoffa, into

Minneapolis, to overthrow the democratically elected leadership of the union.

During those difficult days, Jake was trapped at a loading dock by eight thugs and savagely beaten, resulting in prolonged hospitalization. He carried scars on his face and body for the rest of his life.

Tobin's assault was reinforced by attacks by the state government, the courts, and labor boards, and then, in June 1941, the FBI under the direction of Roosevelt's attorney general Francis Biddle raided the Twin Cities headquarters of the SWP. Twenty-nine members of the SWP and Local 544 were indicted, the first prosecutions under the anti-labor Smith Act, a result of the SWP's and 544's opposition to Roosevelt's preparations for U.S. entry into WW II. Eighteen defendants were convicted and sentenced to federal prison on December 7, 1941, the day the Japanese Empire attacked Pearl Harbor.

After exhausting their appeals, the 18 entered prison in 1943 to serve sentences ranging up to 16 months. This, too, turned out to be a high point for Jake, in spite of the imprisonment, as he spent over a year in close company with Jim Cannon, Ray Dunne, Carl Skoglund, and the other comrades, an unparalleled opportunity, he said many times, to learn revolutionary politics.

After their release from prison, Jake and the other defendants found themselves blacklisted from most employment in Minneapolis. Jake eventually found work at the Armour meatpacking plant in South St. Paul, at that time one of the biggest packing centers in the country. Jake was soon elected a steward of his department, and an officer of the Armour local, United Packinghouse Workers of America Local 4. Years later, in 1984, Jake worked with striking members of what was left of the local, then known as Local 4-P of the United Food and Commercial Workers, at Iowa Pork Industries.

In 1948 Jake and other SWP members in the UPWA (including district director Joe Ollman, a founder of the Hormel workers' union in Austin) participated in a bitterly contested national packinghouse strike. The union organized mass picketing in South St. Paul, shutting down the Armour, Swift, and Cudahy plants there, with Jake playing an outstanding role on the picket line. Minnesota National Guard troops were called out, but the fight put up in South St. Paul was a crucial element in preventing defeat of the national strike.

The Armour Company nevertheless succeeded eventually in firing Jake, who could find work only at a small packing plant in St. Paul as a beef lugger, a grueling job, carrying sides of beef weighing hundreds of pounds. As the reactionary cold war political climate drove its way into the labor movement, and as possibilities for party work in the unions shrank down to little or nothing, Jake returned

to Chaska to take over the family store from his aging parents in 1949.

The store later became a major supermarket and Jake became a prominent and successful businessman in Chaska. Nevertheless, when Jake, along with other veterans of the Minneapolis Teamsters movement were honored at the 1969 Young Socialist Alliance convention in Minneapolis, reactionary elements in the community launched a red-baiting boycott of the Coopers store. Although nearly driven out of business, a defense campaign backed by civil libertarians and others in Chaska and throughout the state eventually defeated the campaign.

The store grew steadily in size and business, but Jake never changed. The business to him was simply a means of providing for his family, and his community, and the class he identified with. Any food product being produced at a struck plant was removed from the shelves of the store, often even before the union had gotten around to asking for a boycott. Jake's connections with the wholesale distribution end of the grocery business were utilized to deliver food to striking unions, again usually before they had thought of asking for any. In recognition of his help in their strike, the teachers in the Chaska public school system established the Jake Cooper Scholarship in 1985.

When the Hormel strike of 1985-86 began, Jake stepped forward and took the assignment of chairman of the Twin Cities P-9 Support Committee's food committee. Even though he was nearly 70 years old and still working in the dairy department of the store, Jake put in hundreds of hours working the phones and visiting unions asking for support for Local P-9's food shelf. Many times he would put in a few hours in the morning working at the store and then drive the 30 miles into the Support Committee office at the St. Paul Electricians Hall, arriving still wearing his grocery apron.

Although Jake's connections with the food industry were indispensable to the success of the six food caravans organized to Austin over the course of the strike, it was his political will, determination, and knowledge of what the workers' needs were that, even more, made the Support Committee the success it was. Jake insisted that the food had to be delivered by lengthy car and truck caravans, culminating in mass support rallies in Austin.

Jake spoke at every rally, and on innumerable other occasions, reiterating his conviction that only by closing the plant through mass picketing could the Hormel workers hope to win. He rejected reliance on anything other than the power of the workers, including hopes placed in Democratic Party politicians, corporate campaigns, and other proffered solutions. When he got up to speak, it wasn't to take credit for delivering a lot of

food, but to say what he thought ought to be done to win the strike. I once saw Jake, intent on communicating some strategic idea to the Hormel workers, proceed into a closed meeting of over 1,000 strikers without an invitation. I was curious about what would happen next, and was impressed, but not greatly surprised when, as soon as the intruder was recognized, he was lifted up on the shoulders of the workers and carried onto the stage to a prolonged standing ovation and seated there for the rest of the meeting.

Over 1,000 people attended his wake and memorial meeting in Chaska, including a big contingent of blue jackets from the original Local P-9. His brother and comrade Dave spoke last, and said, in the spirit of Jake's never shrinking from controversy, that he wanted them to know that Jake was against the presence of U.S. troops in Saudi Arabia, and was opposed to any U.S. soldier dying for Exxon and Chevron.

Jake was an utterly honest human being, who remained true to the ideas he embraced as a youth, and never hedged on what they were. Through all the exigencies of life, he found a way to preach what he believed in and used the tools available to him to advance the cause of the workers. He was profoundly respected by the most diverse elements in his community, and the working class, for his honesty, his humanity, and his unshakable belief in a better world. When he went to prison in 1943 he told the farewell banquet: "This is a real occasion and one I shall never forget. Look at the friends we have here tonight, the dinner we have had here tonight, the way it has been served. This is my idea of the way people should live. Fighting humanity can march forward and the people can have the best of all things that this world has to offer. When we come back we aim to fight for this very thing. This is the kind of world I want to fight for." He did. □

Dave Riehle

Tamara Deutscher (1913-1990)

The obituary page of the August 9, 1990, editions of the *New York Times* carried a brief notice of the death of Tamara Deutscher in London August 7 at age 77. The capitalist press in Europe, where she was better known as an historian of the Russian Revolution and defender of Leon Trotsky, may have published more details of her life and work. Readers

in this country received only the bare outline of her career: that she was born in Poland, escaped to England during World War II, served as secretary to an expatriate organization of Polish journalists in London, and married Isaac Deutscher (Trotsky's biographer) in 1947. The report here said she published her own book, *The Other Lenin*, in 1973, "and later assisted the historian E. H. Carr in preparing the last volumes of his history of the Soviet Union."

She was much more than this indicates. She was a dedicated scholar and popular writer, and she was a devoted friend of the Trotskyist movement in Europe. Her talents were recognized and appreciated both in the academic world and in the revolutionary Marxist movement, and not least by her late husband. In his preface in 1963 to the third volume of the Trotsky biography, Isaac Deutscher acknowledged Tamara's part in its production: "My wife's contribution to this volume has been not only that of unfailing assistant and critic—in the course of many years, ever since 1950 when we first pored together over *The Trotsky Archives*, she absorbed the air of this tragic drama; and, through her sensitive sympathy with its *personae*, she has helped me decidedly in portraying their characters and narrating their fortunes."

In 1986 Tamara Deutscher wrote a lengthy introduction to David King's photographic biography of Trotsky, in which she expressed her own appreciation of Trotsky's accomplishments in his lifelong devotion to the cause of human emancipation. The following paragraph, referring only to the ten short years of his last exile, is an example.

All through his enforced peregrinations Trotsky never remained silent for longer than it took him to unpack his papers and seize his pen. With only Lyova, who never wavered in his devotion to his father's cause, as assistant and helpmate, and a small handful of transient foreign sympathizers, he instantly reacted to and commented on every event of contemporary politics: on the rise of fascism, on Roosevelt's New Deal, on the Spanish Civil War, and above all on the social disease of Nazism. He provided incisive analyses of developments, political and economic, in his own country and increasingly denounced Stalin's misdeeds.

Tamara shared most of her husband's criticism of Trotsky's political course at crucial junctures, but her devotion to the cause in which Trotsky lived and died is unmistakable. Her contributions are part of the rich heritage of the Trotskyist movement. □

Frank Lovell

Socialism and Democracy

by James P. Cannon

The founder of American Trotskyism gave this speech at the Socialist Workers Party's West Coast Vacation School, September 1, 1957. It was issued as a pamphlet by Pioneer Publishers, March 1959.

Comrades, I am glad to be here with you today, and to accept your invitation to speak on socialism and democracy. It is a most timely subject, and in the discussion of socialist regroupment it takes first place. Before we can make real headway in the discussion of other important parts of the program, we have to find agreement on what we mean by socialism and what we mean by democracy, and how they are related to each other, and what we are going to say to the American workers about them.

Strange as it may seem, an agreement on these two simple, elementary points, as experience has already demonstrated, will not be arrived at easily. The confusion and demoralization created by Stalinism, and the successful exploitation of this confusion by the ruling capitalists of this country and all their agents and apologists, still hangs heavily over all sections of the workers' movement. We have to recognize that. Even in the ranks of people who call themselves socialists, we encounter a wide variety of understandings and misunderstandings about the real meaning of those simple terms, socialism and democracy. And in the great ranks of the American working class, the fog of misunderstanding and confusion is even thicker. All this makes the clarification of these questions a problem of burning importance and immediacy. In fact, it is first on the agenda in all circles of the radical movement.

The widespread misunderstanding and confusion about socialism and democracy has profound causes. These causes must be frankly stated and examined before they can be removed. And we must undertake to remove them, if we are to try in earnest to get to the root of the problem.

Shakespeare's Mark Antony reminded us that evil quite often outlives its authors. That is true in the present case also. Stalin is dead, but the crippling influence of Stalinism on the minds of a whole generation of people who considered themselves socialists or communists lives after Stalin. This is testified to most eloquently by those members and fellow travelers of the Communist Party who have formally disavowed Stalinism since the Twentieth Congress, while retaining some of its most perverted conceptions and definitions.

Socialism, in the old days that I can recall, was often called the society of the free and equal, and democracy was defined as the rule of the people. These simple definitions still ring true to me, as they did when I first heard them many years ago. But in later years we have heard different definitions which are far less attractive. These same people whom I have mentioned—leaders of the Communist Party and fellow travelers, who have sworn off Stalin without really changing any of the Stalinist ideas they assimilated—still blandly describe the state of affairs in the Soviet Union, with all its most exaggerated social and economic inequality, ruled over by the barbarous dictatorship of a privileged minority, as a form of "socialism." And they still manage to say with straight faces that the hideous police regimes in the satellite countries, propped up by Russian military force, are some kind of "People's Democracies."

When such people say it would be a fine idea for all of us to get together in the struggle for socialism and democracy, it seems to me it would be appropriate to ask them, by way of preliminary inquiry: "Just what do you mean by socialism, and what do you mean by democracy? Do you mean what Marx and Engels and Lenin said? Or do you mean what Stalin did?" They are not the same thing, as can be easily proved, and it is necessary to choose between one set of definitions and the other.

This confusion of terminology has recently been illustrated by an article of Howard Fast, the well-known writer who was once awarded the Stalin Prize. For a long time Fast supported what he called "socialism" in the Soviet Union with his eyes shut. And then Khrushchev's speech at the Twentieth Congress and other revelations following that opened Fast's eyes, and he doesn't like what he sees. That is to his credit. But he still calls it "socialism." In an article in *Masses and Mainstream* he describes what he had found out about this peculiar "socialism" that had prevailed in the Soviet Union under Stalin and still prevails under Stalin's successors.

This is what Howard Fast said: "In Russia, we have socialism without democracy. We have socialism without trial by jury, habeas corpus or . . . protection against the abuse of confession by torture. We have socialism without civil liberty. . . . We have socialism without public avenues of protest. We have socialism without equality for minorities. We have socialism without any right of free artistic creation. In so many words, we have socialism without morality."

These are the words of Howard Fast. I agree with everything he says there, except the preface he gives to all his qualifications—that we have "socialism" without this and that, we have "socialism" without any of the features that a socialist society was supposed to have in the conceptions of the movement before Stalinism. It is as though Fast has discovered different varieties of socialism. Like mushrooms. You go out and pick the right kind and you can cook a tasty dish. But if you gather up the kind commonly known as toadstools and call them mushrooms, you will poison yourself. Stalinist "socialism" is about as close to the real thing as a toadstool is to an edible mushroom.

Now, of course, the Stalinists and their apologists have not created all the confusion in this country about the meaning of socialism, at least not directly. At every step for 30 years the Stalinist work of befuddlement and demoralization, of debasing words into their opposite meanings, has been supported by reciprocal action of the same kind by the ruling capitalists and their apologists. They have never failed to take the Stalinists at their word, and to point to the Stalinist regime in the Soviet Union, with all of its horrors, and to say: "That is socialism. The American way of life is better."

It is these people who have given us, as their contribution to sowing confusion in the minds of people, the delightful definition of the capitalist sector of the globe, where the many toil in poverty for the benefit of the few, as "the free world." And they describe the United States, where the workers have a right to vote every four years, if they don't move around too much, but have no say

about the control of the shop and the factory; where all the means of mass information and communication are monopolized by a few—they describe all that as the ideal democracy for which the workers should gladly fight and die.

It is true that Stalinism has been the primary cause of the demoralization of a whole generation of American *radical* workers. There is no question of that. But the role of Stalinism of prejudicing the great American working class against socialism, and inducing them to accept the counterfeit democracy of American capitalism as the lesser evil, has been mainly indirect. The active role in this miseducation and befuddlement has been played by the American ruling minority, through all their monopolized means of communication and information.

They have cynically accepted the Stalinist definition, and have obligingly advertised the Soviet Union, with its grinding poverty and glaring inequality, with its ubiquitous police terror, frame-ups, mass murders, and slave-labor camps, as a “socialist” order of society. They have utilized the crimes of Stalinism to prejudice the American workers against the very name of socialism. And worst of all, comrades, we have to recognize that this campaign has been widely successful, and that we have to pay for it. We cannot build a strong socialist movement in this country until we overcome this confusion in the minds of the American workers about the real meaning of socialism.

This game of confusing and misrepresenting has been facilitated

That’s the bitter truth, and it must be looked straight in the face. This barrier to the expansion and development of the American socialist movement will not be overcome, and even a regroupment of the woefully limited forces of those who at present consider themselves socialists will yield but little fruit, unless and until we find a way to break down this misunderstanding and prejudice against socialism, and convince at least the more advanced American workers that we socialists are the most aggressive and consistent advocates of democracy in all fields; and that, in fact, we are completely devoted to the idea that socialism cannot be realized otherwise than by democracy.

The socialist movement in America will not advance again significantly until it regains the initiative and takes the offensive against capitalism, and all its agents in the labor movement, precisely on the issue of democracy. What is needed is not a propaganda device or trick, but a formulation of the issue as it really stands: and, indeed, as it has always stood with real socialists ever since the modern movement was first proclaimed 109 years ago. For this counteroffensive against bourgeois propaganda, we do not need to look for new formulations. Our task, as socialists living and fighting in this day and hour, is simply to restate what socialism and democracy meant to the founders of our movement, and to all the authentic disciples who followed them: to bring their formulations up to date and apply them to present conditions in the United States.

“American workers have become more acutely sensitive than ever before to the value and importance of democratic rights”

for the capitalists, and aided to a considerable extent, by the social democrats and the labor bureaucracy, who are themselves privileged beneficiaries of the American system, and who give a socialist and labor coloring to the defense of American “democracy.” In addition to all that, we have to recognize that in this country, more than any other in the world, the tremendous pressures of imperialist prosperity and power and the witch-hunt persecution have deeply affected the thinking of many people who call themselves radicals or ex-radicals. These powerful pressures have brought many of them to a reconciliation with capitalist society and to the defense of capitalist democracy, if not as a paradise at least as a lesser evil, and the best that can be hoped for.

There is no doubt that this drumfire of bourgeois propaganda, supplemented by the universal revulsion against Stalinism, has profoundly affected the sentiments of the American working class, including the bulk of its most progressive and militant and potentially revolutionary sectors.

After all that has happened in the past quarter of a century, the American workers have become more acutely sensitive than ever before to the value and importance of democratic rights. That, in my opinion, is the progressive side of their reaction, which we should fully share. The horrors of fascism, as they were revealed in the thirties, and which were never dreamed of by the socialists in the old days, and the no less monstrous crimes of Stalinism, which became public knowledge later—all this has inspired a fear and hatred of any kind of dictatorship in the minds of the American working class. And to the extent that the Stalinist dictatorship in Russia has been identified with the name of socialism, and that this identification has been taken as a matter of course, the American workers have been prejudiced against socialism.

This restatement of basic aims and principles cannot wait; it is, in fact, the burning necessity of the hour. There is no room for misunderstanding among us as to what such a restatement of our position means and requires. It requires a clean break with all Stalinist and social democratic perversions and distortions of the real meaning of socialism and democracy, and their relation to each other, and a return to the original formulations and definitions. Nothing short of this will do.

The authentic socialist movement, as it was conceived by its founders and as it has developed over the past century, has been the most democratic movement in all history. No formulation of this question can improve on the classic statement of the *Communist Manifesto*, with which modern scientific socialism was proclaimed to the world in 1848. The *Communist Manifesto* said: “All previous historical movements were movements of minorities, in the interest of minorities. The proletarian movement is the self-conscious, independent movement of the immense majority, in the interest of the immense majority.”

The authors of the *Communist Manifesto* linked socialism and democracy together as end and means. The “self-conscious, independent movement of the immense majority, in the interest of the immense majority” cannot be anything else but democratic, if we understand by “democracy” the rule of the people, the majority. The Stalinist claim that the task of reconstructing society on a socialist basis can be farmed out to a privileged and uncontrolled bureaucracy, while the workers remain without voice or vote in the process, is just as foreign to the thoughts of Marx and Engels, and of all their true disciples, as the reformist idea that socialism can be handed down to the workers by degrees, by the capitalists who exploit them.

All such fantastic conceptions were answered in advance by the reiterated statement of Marx and Engels that “the emancipation of the working class is the task of the workers themselves.” That is the language of Marx and Engels—“the task of the workers themselves.” That was just another way of saying—as they said explicitly many times—that the socialist reorganization of society requires a workers’ revolution. Such a revolution is unthinkable without the active participation of the majority of the working class, which is itself the big majority of the population. Nothing could be more democratic than that.

Moreover, the great teachers did not limit the democratic action of the working class to the overthrow of the bourgeois supremacy. They defined democracy as the form of governmental rule in the transition period between capitalism and socialism. It is explicitly stated in the *Communist Manifesto*—and I wonder how many people have forgotten this in recent years: “The first step,” said the *Manifesto*, “in the revolution by the working class, is to raise the proletariat to the position of ruling class, to establish democracy.”

That is the way Marx and Engels formulated the first aim of the revolution—to make the workers the ruling class, to establish democracy, which, in their view, is the same thing. From this precise formulation it is clear that Marx and Engels did not consider the limited formal democracy under capitalism, which screens the exploitation and the rule of the great majority by the

And, in the course of further progressive development in all fields, as Lenin expressed it, even this democracy, this workers’ democracy, as a form of class rule, will outlive itself. Lenin said: “Democracy will gradually change and become a habit, and finally wither away,” since democracy itself, properly understood, is a form of state, that is, an instrument of class rule, for which there will be no need and no place in the classless socialist society. Forecasting the socialist future, the *Communist Manifesto* said: “In place of the old bourgeois society, with its classes and class antagonisms, we shall have an association.” Mark that, “an association,” not a state—“an association in which the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all.” Trotsky said the same thing in other words when he spoke of socialism as “a pure and limpid social system which is accommodated to the self-government of the toilers . . . and uninterrupted growth of universal equality—all-sided flowering of human personality . . . unselfish honest and human relations between human beings.”

The bloody abomination of Stalinism cannot be passed off as a substitute for this picture of the socialist future, and the democratic transition period leading up to it, as it was drawn by the great Marxists. And I say we will not put the socialist movement of this country on the right track, and restore its rightful appeal to the best sentiments of the working class of this country, and above all to the young, until we begin to call socialism by its right name as the

“That is the way Marx and Engels formulated the first aim of the revolution—to make the workers the ruling class, to establish democracy”

few, as real democracy. In order to have real democracy, the workers must become the “ruling class.” Only the revolution which replaces the class rule of the capitalists by the class rule of the workers can really “establish democracy,” not in fiction but in fact. So said Marx and Engels.

They never taught that the simple nationalization of the forces of production signified the establishment of socialism. That’s not stated by Marx and Engels anywhere. The nationalization only lays the economic foundations for the transition to socialism. Still less could they have sanctioned, even if they had been able to imagine, the monstrous idea that socialism could be realized without freedom and without equality; that nationalized production and planned economy, controlled by a ruthless police dictatorship, complete with prisons, torture chambers, and forced-labor camps, could be designated as a “socialist” society. That unspeakable perversion and contradiction of terms belongs to the Stalinists and their apologists.

All the great Marxists defined socialism as a classless society—with abundance, freedom, and equality for all: a society in which there would be no state, not even a democratic workers’ state, to say nothing of a state in the monstrous form of a bureaucratic dictatorship of a privileged minority. The Soviet Union today is a transitional order of society in which the bureaucratic dictatorship of a privileged minority, far from serving as the agency to bridge the transition to socialism, stands as an obstacle to harmonious development in that direction. In the view of Marx and Engels, and of Lenin and Trotsky who came after them, the transition from capitalism to the classless society of socialism could only be carried out by an ever-expanding democracy, involving the masses of the workers more and more in all phases of social life, by direct participation and control.

great teachers did. Until we make it clear that we stand for an ever-expanding workers’ democracy, as the only road to socialism. Until we root out every vestige of Stalinist perversion and corruption of the meaning of socialism and democracy, and restate the thoughts and formulations of the authentic Marxist teachers.

But the Stalinist definitions of socialism and democracy are not the only perversions that have to be rejected before we can find a sound basis for the regroupment of socialist forces in the United States. The definitions of the social democrats of all hues and gradations are just as false. And in this country they are a still more formidable obstacle, because they have deeper roots, and they are tolerantly nourished by the ruling class itself. The liberals, the social democrats, and the bureaucratic bosses of the American trade unions are red-hot supporters of “democracy.” At least that is what they say. And they strive to herd the workers into the imperialist war camp under the general slogan of “Democracy versus Dictatorship.” That is their slippery and consciously deceptive substitute for the real “irrepressible conflict” of our age, the conflict between capitalism and socialism. They speak of democracy as something that stands by itself, above the classes and the class struggle, and not as the form of rule of one class over another.

Lenin put his finger on this misrepresentation of reality in his polemic against Kautsky. Lenin said: “A liberal naturally speaks of ‘democracy’ in general; but a Marxist will never forget to ask: ‘For what class?’ Everyone knows, for instance (and Kautsky the ‘historian’ knows it too), that rebellions, or even strong ferment, among the slaves in antiquity at once revealed the fact that the state of antiquity was essentially a *dictatorship of the slave-owners*. Did this dictatorship abolish democracy among, and for, the *slave-owners*? Everybody knows that it did not.”

Capitalism under any kind of government, whether bourgeois democracy, or fascism, or a military police state—under any kind of government, capitalism is a system of minority rule, and the principal beneficiaries of capitalist democracy are the small minority of exploiting capitalists, scarcely less so than the slave-owners of ancient times were the actual rulers and the real beneficiaries of the Athenian democracy. To be sure, the workers, in the United States have a right to vote periodically for one of two sets of candidates selected for them by the two capitalist parties. And if they can dodge the witch-hunters, they can exercise the right of free speech and free press. But this formal right of free speech and free press is outweighed rather heavily by the inconvenient circumstance that the small capitalist minority happens to enjoy a complete monopoly of ownership and control of all the big presses, and of television and radio, and of all other means of communication and information.

We who oppose the capitalist regime have a right to nominate our own candidates, if we're not arrested under the Smith Act before we get to the city clerk's office, and if we can comply with the laws that deliberately restrict the rights of minority parties. That is easier said than done in this country of democratic capitalism. In one state after another, no matter how many petitions you can circulate, you can't comply with the regulations and you can't get on the ballot. This is the state of affairs in California, Ohio, Illinois, and an increasing number of other states. And if you

took the mighty and irresistible labor upheaval of the thirties, culminated by the great sit-down strikes—a semirevolution of the American workers—to establish in reality the right of union organization in mass production industry. And yet today—I am still speaking under the heading of democracy—20 years after the sit-down strikes firmly established the auto workers' union, the automobile industry is still privately owned and ruled by a dictatorship of financial sharks. The auto workers have neither voice nor vote in the management of the industry which they have created, nor in regulating the speed of the assembly line which consumes their lives. Full control of production in auto and steel and everywhere, according to the specific terms of the union contract, is still the exclusive prerogative of "management," that is, of the absentee owners who contribute nothing to the production of automobiles, or steel or anything else. What is democratic about that? The claim that we have an almost perfect democracy in this country doesn't stand up against the fact that the workers have no democratic rights in industry at all, as far as regulating production is concerned: that these rights are exclusively reserved for the parasitic owners who never see the inside of a factory.

In the old days, the agitators of the Socialist Party and the IWW—who were real democrats—used to give a shorthand definition of socialism as "industrial democracy." I don't know how many of you have heard that. It was a common expression: "industrial democracy," the extension of democracy to industry,

"That socialist demand for real democracy was taken for granted in the times of Debs and Haywood, when the American socialist movement was still young and uncorrupted"

succeed in complying with all the technicalities, as we did last year in New York, they just simply rule you out anyhow if it is not convenient to have a minority party on the ballot. But outside of all these and other difficulties and restrictions, we have free elections and full democracy.

It is true that the Negro people in the United States, 94 years after the Emancipation Proclamation, are still fighting for the right to vote in the South; and for the right to take a vacant seat on a public bus; or to send their children to a tax-supported public school, and things of that kind—which you may call restrictions of democracy in the United States.

But even so, with all that, a little democracy is better than none. We socialists have never denied that. And after the experiences of fascism and McCarthyism, and of military and police dictatorships in many parts of the world, and of the horrors of Stalinism, we have all the more reason to value every democratic provision for the protection of human rights and human dignity: to fight for more democracy, not less. Socialists should not argue with the American worker when he says he wants democracy and doesn't want to be ruled by a dictatorship. Rather we should recognize that his demand for human rights and democratic guarantees, now and in the future, is in itself progressive. The socialist task is not to deny democracy but to expand it and make it more complete. That is the true socialist tradition. The Marxists, throughout the century-long history of our movement, have always valued and defended bourgeois democratic rights, restricted as they were, and have utilized them for the education and organization of the workers in the struggle to establish full democracy by abolishing the capitalist rule altogether.

The right of union organization is a precious right, a democratic right, but it was not "given" to the workers in the United States. It

the democratic control of industry by the workers themselves, with private ownership eliminated. That socialist demand for real democracy was taken for granted in the times of Debs and Haywood, when the American socialist movement was still young and uncorrupted.

You never hear a "democratic" labor leader say anything like that today. The defense of "democracy" by the social democrats and the labor bureaucrats always turns out in practice to be a defense of "democratic" capitalism, or as Beck and McDonald call it, "people's capitalism." And I admit they have a certain stake in it, and a certain justification for defending it, as far as their personal interests are concerned. And always, in time of crisis, these social democrats and labor leaders, who talk about democracy all the time, as against dictatorship in the "socialist countries" as they call them—in time of crisis, they easily excuse and defend all kinds of violations of even this limited bourgeois democracy. They are far more tolerant of lapses from the formal rules of democracy by the capitalists than by the workers. They demand that the class struggle of the workers against the exploiters be conducted by the formal rules of bourgeois democracy, at all stages of its development—up to and including the stage of social transformation and the defense of the new society against attempts at capitalist restoration. They say it has to be strictly "democratic" all the way. No emergency measures are tolerated: everything must be strictly and formally democratic, according to the rules laid down by the capitalist minority. They burn incense to democracy as an immutable principle, an abstraction standing above the social antagonisms. But when the capitalist class, in its struggle for self-preservation, cuts corners around its own professed democratic principles, the liberals, the social democrats, and the labor skates have a way of winking, or looking the other way, or finding excuses for it.

For example, they do not protest when the American imperialists wage war according to the rules of war, which are not quite the same thing as the rules of "democracy." When the atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, it never occurred to these professional democrats to demand a referendum of the noncombatant residents of these doomed cities as to how they felt about it. The most they could offer, these democrats, after this ghastly fact, the most abominable atrocity in all history—the bombing of a defenseless civilian population and the wiping out of whole cities of men, women, and children—the best these liberals, labor fakers, and social democratic defenders of American democracy could offer was the plaintive bleat of Norman Thomas. You know, he was supporting the war, naturally, being a social democrat. But Norman Thomas rose up after Nagasaki and Hiroshima were wiped off the face of the earth and said the bombs should not have been dropped "without warning." The others said nothing.

These professional democrats have no objection to the authoritarian rule of the military forces of the capitalist state, which deprives the rank-and-file soldiers of all democratic rights in life-and-death matters, including the right to elect their own officers. The dictatorial rule of MacArthur in Japan, who acted as a tsar over a whole conquered country, was never questioned by these professional opponents of all other dictators. They are against the dictators in the Kremlin, but the dictator in Japan—

the help of the employers and the government—to keep their own "party" in control of the unions and to suppress and beat down any attempt of the rank and file to form an opposition "party" to put up an opposition slate. And yet, without freedom of association and organization, without the right to form groups and parties of different tendencies, there is and can be no real democracy anywhere.

In practice, the American labor bureaucrats, who piously demand democracy in the one-party totalitarian domain of Stalinism, come as close as they can to maintaining a total one-party rule in their own domain. Kipling said: "The colonel's lady and Judy O'Grady are sisters under the skin." The Stalinist bureaucrats in Russia and the trade union bureaucrats in the United States are not sisters, but they are much more alike than different. They are essentially of the same breed, a privileged caste dominated above all by motives of self-benefit and self-preservation at the expense of the workers and against the workers.

The privileged bureaucratic caste everywhere is the most formidable obstacle to democracy and socialism. The struggle of the working class in both sections of the now divided world has become, in the most profound meaning of the term, a struggle against the usurping privileged bureaucracy. In the Soviet Union it is a struggle to restore the genuine workers' democracy established by the revolution of 1917. Workers' democracy has become a burning necessity to assure the harmonious transition to

***"So the fight for workers' democracy is
inseparable from the fight for socialism,
and the condition for its victory"***

that was a horse of another color. All that, you see, concerns war: and nothing, not even the sacred principles of "democracy," can be allowed to stand in the way of the victory of the American imperialists in the war, and the cinching up of the victory afterward in the occupation. But in the class struggle of the workers against the capitalists to transform society, which is the fiercest war of all, and in the transition period after the victory of the workers—the professional democrats demand that the formal rules of bourgeois democracy, as defined by the minority of exploiters, be scrupulously observed at every step. No emergency measures are allowed.

By these different responses in different situations of a class nature, the professional democrats simply show that their class bias determines their judgment in each case, and show at the same time that their professed devotion to the rules of formal democracy, at all times and under all conditions, is a fraud. And when it comes to the administration of workers' organizations under their control, the social democrats and the reformist labor leaders pay very little respect to their own professed democratic principles. The trade unions in the United States today, as you all know, are administered and controlled by little cliques of richly privileged bureaucrats who use the union machinery, and the union funds, and a private army of goon squads, and—whenever necessary—

socialism. That is the meaning of the political revolution against the bureaucracy, now developing throughout the whole Soviet sphere, which every socialist worthy of the name unreservedly supports. There is no sense in talking about regroupment with people who don't agree on that, on defense and support of the Soviet workers against the Soviet bureaucrats. In the United States the struggle for workers' democracy is preeminently a struggle of the rank and file to gain democratic control of their own organizations. That is the necessary condition to prepare the final struggle to abolish capitalism and "establish democracy" in the country as a whole. No party in this country has a right to call itself socialist, unless it stands four-square for the rank-and-file workers of the United States against the bureaucrats.

In my opinion, effective and principled regroupment of socialist forces requires full agreement on these two points. That is the necessary starting point. Capitalism does not survive by its own strength as a social system, but by its influence within the workers' movement, reflected and expressed by the labor aristocracy and the bureaucracy. So the fight for workers' democracy is inseparable from the fight for socialism, and the condition for its victory. Workers' democracy is the only road to socialism, here in the United States and everywhere else, all the way from Moscow to Los Angeles and from here to Budapest. □

Story of Steel

Sparrows Point—Making Steel: The Rise and Ruin of American Industrial Might, by Mark Reutter. New York, Summit Books, Simon & Schuster, 1988. 494 pp., \$14.95

Reviewed by Haskell Berman

Mark Reutter, a free-lance writer, a former reporter for the *Baltimore Sun*, in *Sparrows Point* has traced the 100-year history of a key Bethlehem steel plant to tell a more profound story of the rise and fall of the U.S. steel industry. Through his inquisitive research, using government records, news clippings, records of speeches of important personalities and pertinent interviews, he has described in minute detail its development and decline. This work compares well with Gustavus Myers's *History of the Great American Fortunes* and Ferdinand Lundberg's *America's Sixty Families*.

By tracking down and tracing the experiences of those individuals who at different times contributed to the evolution of the Sparrows Point plant as industrialists, managers, engineers, and workers, Reutter describes how this plant in 1957 became the largest steel plant in the world. Through biographical documentation he exposes the deceptions, manipulations, and operations of the key industry moguls in their vicious drive and competition to enhance their wealth and power, and the price that workers had to pay for their exploits. The first half of the book deals with how the development of the plant coincided with timely technical inventions in the processes of making steel and how this met the national need for improved steel products to build railroads, ships, and war materials for the sinews of World War I and II.

The interrelationship between U.S. industry and imperialism is dramatically illustrated in this study. Sparrows Point became the largest and most competitive U.S. steel plant based on an ability to extract the cheapest high grade ore from Cuba, Chile, and Venezuela at its tidewater location.

"In Pittsburgh the steel masters had all the coal they needed close at hand, but they had to go to the Upper Peninsula of Michigan to get good grades of ore. This ore was boated some 700 miles from Lake Superior via the Sault Ste. Marie Canal and thence 140 miles by rail from Lake Erie to Pittsburgh." In 1882 a new general manager, Luther Bent, of the Pennsylvania Steel Co., sent his top engineer, Frederick Wood, to Cuba to check out a rumor of the existence of large deposits of iron ore in the Sierra Maestra. Searching the southwestern side Wood's hunch was confirmed in a few days. "He found 1,000 acres of sidehills honeycombed with veins of ore—15,000,000 tons," Reutter notes. "Since the land was unclaimed jungle, mineral rights could be secured free of charge by simply filing an application at the land office in Santiago." Bent immediately obtained a royal decree from the Crown of Spain that exempted the Pennsylvania Steel Co. for 20 years "free from all tax on the surface ore mined and all classes of export taxes." In return Spain obtained a mine in 20 years, a rail line, and 700 jobs. To share the risk and raise new capital Pennsylvania Steel enlisted the Bethlehem Iron Company and formed the Juragua Iron Company, Ltd. To exploit the source of cheap grade ore the new company built a tidewater plant on a peninsula on the edge of the Chesapeake Bay outside the city of Baltimore. Sparrows Point became the site for the processing of oversea ore and for an extensive company town situated around the steel mill.

With the pretext of freeing Cuba from the domination of Spain, the Spanish-American War of 1898 enabled American troops to land in Cuba at the Juragua mine site and at the port of an adjoining

mine (Daiquiri) that had more recently come under the ownership of John D. Rockefeller and his Standard Oil conglomerate. U.S. investments were thus secured by a military occupation which lasted until 1902. In passing the Foraker Amendment Congress sought a public posture "to affirm that the United States had invaded Cuba on the basis of democratic principles rather than economic self-interests." It asserted: "No property, franchises, or concessions, of any kind whatever, shall be granted by the U.S. or by any other military or other authority whatever, in the Island of Cuba during the occupation thereof by the United States."

Shortly after the amendment was adopted military governor Major General Leonard Wood was appointed to replace Major General John R. Brook who was considered too literal in his interpretation of the Foraker Amendment. General Wood and the War Department used the device of a "revokable permit" which they issued in Havana to private interests who sought Foraker's forbidden concessions. Wood ruled for the steel industry that mining claims by foreigners were not covered by the Foraker ban in that mining "Claims" were not the same as mining "Concessions." He gave an indefinite continuance to the existing claims at Juragua and Daiquiri (which were about to expire in 1903). In addition the U.S. military governor exempted all future mining claims from Cuban property taxes or mining royalties.

Dependency and collusion between the government and the steel companies in the U.S. also played a key role in the history of the development of the steel industry and the Bethlehem Sparrows Point plant in particular. Special water privileges and rates were obtained from the city of Baltimore officials. To have the company control the police force of the new town, special rights were obtained from the governor of the state of Maryland. Bethlehem's plant in the Lehigh Valley became a major supplier of goods for the U.S. and foreign governments—first producing armor plate and then using the profits from navy sales to move into artillery gun production. Through convenient agreements between company directors and government officials, arranged through the channel of political connections, profitable orders were assured and contracts were obtained. Circumvention of law was a general practice. War was a special boon. For example, Charles Schwab, a principal owner and director of Bethlehem Steel, in the fall of 1914 at the behest of the British secretary of war, made a secret agreement with Lord Kitchener to become Britain's principal arms supplier at the beginning of World War I. A month later Schwab, acting for Bethlehem in a secret contract with Churchill, agreed to build in the U.S. 20 torpedo submarines at \$500,000 each. When the story leaked out (such an agreement was in violation of U.S. neutrality law) Schwab successfully circumvented the law by building the steel parts in the U.S. and having the submarines assembled in Canada.

The Sparrows Point peninsula was designed not only for the process of producing steel but for the profit of the personnel who were involved in that process. The town was laid out with the hierarchical structure of the plant's personnel in mind. Homes were built on a parallel grid, evolving from simple to complex according to the status of their tenants. Included was a company store which was designed to make a profit and keep a part of the worker's paycheck. "The world of Sparrows Point was made up of order-givers and order-takers, strong-willed bosses demanding work, and often decent pay. 'In them days the foreman had all the power. You went to him for everything. He'd take you out of a gang and put you on the floor or he'd break you if he didn't like your looks.'" The work was heavy, the heat extreme, and the poured molten steel was most dangerous. Deaths and injuries occurred daily. So frequently were workers killed that to accommodate the funeral processions a special train called the "Dolores"

was designed by the Baltimore Transit Co. Its function was to provide space for the grieving party and to carry the casket of the dead steelworker from the plant and through the town to the cemetery outside Baltimore.

In the hiring pattern that continued through the 1920s management ranks were the preserve of native-born WASPs (White Anglo-Saxon Protestants). Skilled and semiskilled workers were recruited from migrants from other steel towns and often included skilled foreign workers who would be limited by company policy in their progress through the hierarchy. Blacks were recruited from the backwater towns of Virginia and North Carolina for the unskilled labor.

Hours at work were long: "Until 1923 the 11-hour day shift, the 13-hour night shift, and a 24-hour swing shift on alternate Sundays remained in effect." In the late '20s, 18,000 employees were directly involved in the steelmaking process at the Point and it is estimated that at least 80,000 were directly dependent upon the income of these workers. In 1957, at the height of the plant's production, 28,600 were employed there and 164,000 were employed throughout the Bethlehem system. With the recession of 1982, however, employment dropped to less than 10,000, and the company racked up a loss of \$1.47 billion (compared to a profit of over \$200 million in 1957).

The tight rein of the Sparrow Point management controlled the workforce and until the Great Depression prevented any union organizing at the Point. While conditions of work were intolerable, the fact that, due to the cheap imported Cuban ore, they paid higher wages than other Baltimore industries served to further discourage any organizing campaign. In 1919 Bethlehem implemented a company union plan that lasted until the successful drive of John L. Lewis and the Steel Workers Organizing Committee (SWOC) obtained their first contract in 1941. The Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel and Tin Workers Union was part of the relatively conservative American Federation of Labor (AFL) which followed the bankrupt policy of organizing only skilled workers. In 1932 it had only 4,000 dues-paying members nationally and was not recognized in any plant in the industry.

The 1929 Depression and its consequences for the workers in the steel industry—part-time work, unemployment, wage cuts—created a new economic and political climate. It raised the consciousness and militancy of the working class and enabled successes in trade union organizing and also in radical politicizing.

Reutter attributes much of the success in the union organizing to the shelter provided by the Roosevelt administration and secretary of labor, Frances Perkins, under the National Recovery Act and the Wagner Labor Act. If there is a weakness in his presentation, it involves a failure to present the dynamics within the class that put pressure on the government and the workers' leadership that enabled the building of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) and its industrial union movement.

Included in his section "The Coming of the CIO" is a description of a campaign by a socialist, Charles Bernstein (who founded the *Maryland Labor Herald* to overcome the falsehoods of the *Baltimore Sun*) and Mike Howard, a volunteer organizer. Together they carried out a campaign to "Make Baltimore a Union Town." Howard is quoted as saying that as they were going door-to-door "we were lit up with this idea because we thought that it would end all the crap you had to take." Reutter also cites the work of Al Richmond, a Communist member of the Trade Union Unity League, who clandestinely sought to reach militant workers in the Sparrows Point plant.

Special attention is devoted to the struggle to throw off the yoke of the moribund AFL craft leadership by John L. Lewis and his campaign in forming the SWOC to organize the steel industry along lines that included all labor under one roof, unskilled as well as skilled.

"The United Mine Workers had the largest number of black members of any union in the country, and this had helped stop the practice of importing blacks to break coal strikes," Reutter writes. To be assured that the SWOC would not be known as a "white man's union" the Baltimore local organizing leadership organized trade union rallies in the Black community endorsed by such Black leaders as Thurgood Marshall, Baltimore lawyer for the NAACP, and John P. Davis of the National Negro Congress. One out of four workmen at Sparrows Point was Black. Baltimore was a Jim Crow town. Lynching of Black men in 1931 and 1933 had been carried out by mobs on Maryland's Eastern Shore. Six months after the organizing campaign was begun 3,000 to 4,000 had signed for the union out of 15,500 employees. In the face of all the obstacles this was a significant victory, considering that the old Amalgamated Union had only 400 workers the previous year. Eight months after Lewis initiated the national SWOC campaign to organize steel, on March 2, 1937, U.S. Steel announced that it had signed a contract with the union at one of its larger mills. Wages were to be raised 62 and 1/2 cents per hour, meeting the union demand for \$5 per day, and a 40-hour week was established with time-and-a-half for overtime. Underlying the compromise on the part of steel was the slow recovery of profits from the 1932 low of the Depression and the anticipation of rising orders in preparation for the coming war in Europe. Also, a lesson was learned from the damage to General Motors by a recent autoworkers' strike.

This settlement by U.S. Steel with SWOC did not sit well with the other independent steel producers. Some followed the example of U.S. Steel, but Bethlehem, Republic, National, Youngstown Sheet, and Inland Steel joined in a coalition that became known as "Little Steel." They hired Pinkerton's National Detective Agency to spy on SWOC organizers. "Company police at Sparrows Point and other plants were supplied in early 1937 with several boxcars' worth of guns and ammunition," Reutter recounts. Tom Girdler carried out his threat to close Republic mills if the employees persisted in joining unions. Nine thousand workers were locked out of mills in two towns in Ohio. To counter the lockout Lewis and Murray issued a strike call against Republic, Inland, and Youngstown. (A decision regarding Bethlehem was held in abeyance.) Four days later near the South Chicago plant of Republic Steel police engaged a group of strikers, shot and killed 10 marchers, and beat or shot 75 others. The state and company violence against the strikers and SWOC escalated and spread: Youngstown picket lines were broken up by Republic police, blood was shed at Republic in Canton, SWOC headquarters was shelled in Massillon by Republic and municipal police, three union members were killed and a striker fatally injured in Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania.

The strike spread to Johnstown. Eight thousand Bethlehem workmen walked out, forcing a partial shutdown. Bethlehem countered by organizing a Citizens' Committee to raise funds for a back-to-work movement. The mayor of Johnstown, Daniel J. Shields, was paid \$36,450.25 for carrying out a vicious red-baiting, slanderous campaign against the union and the strikers. He wired President Roosevelt that he was convinced the union was a Russian organization planning "dynamite explosions of bridges, kidnappings, and the destruction of me and my family."

Attempts to gain a settlement of the steel conflict by the government failed when steel industry owners refused to accept the union proposal for a National Labor Relations Board election that would allow for a winner-take-all solution. Two years of hearings and appeals of unfair labor practice by the steel companies won a ruling from the NLRB that Bethlehem and the others had violated labor law, that they had denied the will of workers through the use of lockouts for union activity and company-sponsored associations. Bethlehem's appeal to the courts was dismissed. In 1941 requests by SWOC for representation elections was finally agreed upon by the company under the threat that government military contracts

could be withheld if there was no compliance with federal law—the Wagner Act was mandated by the National Defense Commission. The lure of government war contracts, along with the recruitment of both industrialists and labor leaders in support of the war effort by the Roosevelt administration, initiated an era of accommodation between labor and steel management. The monopolistic control of prices enabled the steel corporations to use the pretext of wage increases to inflate the price of steel in a stair-step pattern disregarding what the market could bear. Price raises often exceeded the wage increases per unit of cost. Between 1945 and 1950 steel prices rose 66 percent, while for the same period compensation to all steel employees, union and nonunion, rose only 45 percent (according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics index of steel mill products).

It is ironic that an editorial in the *New York Times* of July 15, 1989, criticizes President Bush for considering renewing import quotas on steel. “Three presidents gave U.S. steelmakers ‘temporary’ protection against foreign competition that has lasted for most of the past 20 years and a fourth seems ready to compound the blunder.” The *Times* claims its opposition is in defense of the consumer, citing Caterpillar Tractors whose price for steel has jumped 20 percent in two years. Its editors argue that American steel is competitive now in the domestic market and is gaining abroad. “Forced to retrench by the severe 1981-82 recession, heavy investment in new technology and the reduction of high cost workforce has enabled a \$2 billion profit to be realized last year.” They clinch their argument for a reduction of quotas and the end of a protectionist policy by claiming that quotas add \$7 billion a year to the cost of products containing steel.

In tracing the history of steel, Reutter outlines the umbilical connection of government and the steel industry. He attributes the decline of steel to the stranglehold over the American market by three major foundries, and their operation as part of an earlier international cartel. U.S. Steel, Bethlehem, and Republic ignored the need to invest in research and development, to upgrade and apply the latest steel-making equipment, or to consider the competition of new materials that could be substituted for steel, like aluminum and plastics, and meet their competition. They also ignored their inability to compete with smaller, more modern and efficient specialized steel producers. More than this, Reutter informs us, confidential files obtained by a U.S. military team after World War II indicated a secret agreement between U.S. producers and Europeans to restrict shipments of steel to American markets and to fix quotas on world markets. The Big Three discussed with the European Steel Cartel world steel prices and agreed that steel manufacturing in third world countries should be opposed.

The optimism of the editors of the *New York Times* is sharply challenged in Reutter’s account: “Despite the current upturn in earnings, the long-term outlook for Bethlehem and for Big Steel in America is not bright. Its prosperity is based on protectionism and high prices. While Bethlehem and other companies have cut costs sharply by closing down mills and laying off workers, the industry still has not dealt with the fundamentals: finding new markets and catching up with foreign technology.” He notes that recent profits were restored in the Bethlehem system through one-time asset sales, resourceful use of federal investment tax credits, plus the Reagan administration quotas on semifinished slabs. The mines of Cuba since the revolution no longer provide cheap (almost free) ore.

The huge behemoth plants with obsolete equipment are no longer competitive with the newest foreign plants that use the most sophisticated inventions and processes. Steel manufacturing plants abroad have all the advantages over U.S. steel. Reutter fails, however, to point out that they also must face the major crisis of capitalist overproduction in the world market. This was the straw that broke the camel’s back of the U.S. steel industry in 1981 and necessitates government support here and abroad. The call for

“free competition” and “free enterprise” by the *New York Times* editors is a message of irrelevance. State intervention is an absolute necessity for the steel industry if the steel giants of the world are to survive in the period of the death agony of the capitalist order. □

The German Greens: Socialism and Ecology

The following review first appeared in the January 1989 issue of Critique Communiste—a monthly political and cultural journal published in Paris by the Revolutionary Communist League (LCR), French section of the Fourth International. The translation for the Bulletin in Defense of Marxism is by Keith Mann.

The German Greens—A Social and Political Profile, by Werner Hülsberg. Verso, London, 1988.

Reviewed by Michael Löwy

Werner Hülsberg’s book is the first general analysis of the German Green party from its origins until today. It is an analysis that is remarkable in the richness of both its documentation and its political scope. The author is a former editor of *Was Tun* (organ of the German section of the Fourth International) who without renouncing his revolutionary Marxist convictions has been active for several years in the German Greens, where he leads a left-wing current around the magazine *Horizonte*.

Werner Hülsberg is right when he stresses in his introduction to the book that Marxists have not recognized the scope and social importance of the ecological challenge. Prisoners of “the spirit of progress,” they have not perceived the threat to the survival of humanity that the ecological crisis presents. The critique of the industrial destruction of nature that is found in the Frankfurt School (Adorno, Horkheimer, Marcuse, Walter Benjamin) has not been integrated into the theory or practice of the workers’ movement. (Hülsberg however is off the mark when he cites in parenthesis a recent article by Ernest Mandel as a “negative example”; the latter is precisely one of the rare Marxist economists to take seriously the ecology crisis.)

Insisting on the significance of this problem does not imply that the defense of nature must replace the class struggle as the motor of history. The author leaves no doubt about this question when he notes that “the ecological question is clearly not the central dilemma in which society finds itself.” In another place he writes that “the ecologists are not unified in proposing a solution to the crisis and the ecological approach is not the primary constituent element of a social solution capable of changing society. Moreover, the ecological movements do not have an overall alternative model to propose for society. The ecological question is open to a number of different interpretations and is presented under diverse national forms.”

In order to understand the uniqueness of the German Greens, the author puts them in the context of their roots in postwar German social history. The rise—notably during the sixties and seventies—of an extraparliamentary opposition (student movements, far-left organizations, community initiatives, feminist movements), of a strong pacifist current, and a flourishing ecological movement has created the social and cultural basis for the Green party. The combined result of these social movements was a profound jolt to traditional values. Several examples: in 1966, 72 percent of those polled believed that technology was beneficial (83 percent amongst youth between 16 and 20); in 1981, only 30

percent had the same opinion (23 percent among the youth). In 1966, 8 percent believed that the positive and negative aspects of technology were equal; 53 percent of those polled held this opinion in 1981! Similar changes are visible in the rise of a new sexual morality and in the decline of traditional "German" values: obedience, subordination, order, etc.

The new social movements have also called into question the basis of the consensus established in the postwar West German order: NATO membership, faith in industrial progress under capitalism, anti-communism, and the rejection of all radical social alternatives.

At the beginning, the Green movement was dominated by bourgeois currents, rightists, or apoliticals. But with the radicalization of ecologists and the addition of left alternative currents, the orientation rapidly changed. The movement took on a more political coloration and opened itself up to larger social preoccupations. At the founding of the party in 1980, the left was able to get a program approved which, besides the ecological struggle, included the unilateral nuclear disarmament of West Germany, the 35-hour workweek, the breaking of diplomatic relations with racist and fascist regimes, support to third world liberation struggles, etc. Several months later the rightists quit the Greens and founded "democratic" ecological parties which were destined to disappear rapidly.

In several years, the Greens went on to break the five percent barrier and make a noisy entrance into Parliament where they play the role of permanent troublemakers. Their social base is clearly to the left of the German Social Democratic Party (SPD). For example, while only 21 percent of SPD voters are for the removal of American troops and 45 percent are for West German neutrality, the corresponding figures among the Green voters are 57 percent and 73 percent. This social base is composed of salaried workers, especially the tertiary sector, and youth with a relatively high level of education. According to the political sociologist Peter von Oertzen, they constitute a representative sample of the "workers of the year 2000."

One of the well-known problems of the Greens is their great heterogeneity. Four opposed currents struggle for hegemony. The "eco-liberals" are a rightist minority without much weight, with a moderate reformist perspective. More important are the "realists" (Joshka Fischer, Otto Schily), who advocate a realpolitik of coalition with the SPD. Over the last few years, they have put this orientation into practice in the province of Hess where J. Fischer was minister of the environment in a local social democratic government. But faced with the refusal of the SPD to abandon its support for nuclear energy, the experience ended in failure. At the other end of the Green spectrum are the "fundamentalists" such as Jutta Ditfurth and R. Bahro (who recently broke with the Greens). They refuse all tactical agreements with the SPD and hold that from the point of view of a fundamental ecological change the division between the right and the left appears to have passed. As

Middle East (Continued from page 2)

all, not an anti-imperialist revolutionary, but a capitalist dictator. Once the rhetoric is stripped away he is not qualitatively different than the Kuwaiti emir whom he deposed. He represents the same class interests.

His invasion gave Bush the opening he needed to reassert U.S. power in this oil-rich region. This kind of an intra-Arab conflict plays directly into Washington's and Tel Aviv's hands. It is clear that Hussein is sending young men to die so that the price of crude oil will rise. Working people in the United States have no sympathy for the Iraqi dictator. Anti-intervention activists are understandably confused on how to respond. Correctly, the overwhelming sentiment is to focus the demands of the various coalitions on the United States government, demanding that it end its military intervention in the Middle East. However, many also want to express their opposition to the invasion and annexation of

Hülsberg has accurately observed, the strong points of the realists are the weaknesses of the fundamentalists, and vice versa. The most interesting and most dynamic current (but itself heterogeneous and divided on tactical questions) is that of the "eco-socialists"—Rainer Trepert, Thomas Ebermann, Christian Schmidt, Frieder O. Wolf—who insist on the ties between ecology and socialism, and refuse an orientation of a coalition with the "realists."

The internal struggles of the Greens often take the form—to the great delight of the liberal and reactionary press—of a confrontation of two blocs: eco-liberals and "realos" on one side, and eco-socialists and fundamentalists on the other, with certain personalities such as Petra Kelly playing the role of mediator. Nevertheless, none of these currents are interested in breaking the unity of the party, and a certain consensus—generally favorable to the left—has emerged in federal conferences (where, for example, the efforts of the "realos" to moderate the anti-NATO positions of the party have failed). Contrary to what might have been expected, these internal differences have not stopped the Greens from improving their scores in the last federal elections in 1987 (8.3 percent).

Another positive development of the last few years has been the rapprochement between the Greens and the union left—the leadership of the IG metal union—around the campaign for the 35-hour workweek and for the defense of the right to strike.

In any case, the author does not hide the fact that there are many problems that must be resolved before the Greens can really become an eco-socialist party: the absence of transitional demands between immediate "minimum" program and the "maximum" program of ecological utopia, confusion among all the currents on the question of an alternative economic model (what place for the plan or the market?), the growing weight of the parliamentary group (dominated by the "realos"), the incapacity to formulate an adequate tactic towards the SPD (neither coalitionist nor sectarian), illusions on a pacific transition—i.e., parliamentarian—towards eco-socialism, etc.

On the other hand, Hülsberg realizes that the Green model is not necessarily exportable. What lessons for France can we draw from the German experience? The French Greens are distinguished from their German cothinkers by a profound apoliticism and a categorical refusal of any relations with the alternative left.

However, as Daniel Bensaïd and Alain Krivine have underlined in their last book, ecology is one of the great challenges of humanity in the third millennium. It is therefore urgent that Marxists realize that "in the face of an ecological catastrophe without borders, a new alliance between man and nature involves a redefinition of the meaning of progress: not as an unlimited accumulation of goods, but by the growing human liberation from the constraints of labor" (*Mai Si! 1968-1988, rebelles and repentis*. La Breche, Paris, p. 114.). □

Kuwait by Iraq. The danger, however, is that this could lead to an ambiguity about opposition to the U.S.'s war moves—an appearance that U.S. activists are placing conditions or qualifications on our demand that U.S. troops be brought home. (See motion adopted by FIT national conference on page 2.) A simple appeal to the right of Kuwait to self-determination cannot solve this dilemma, since the situation is more complex than that. The borders which divide Arab from Arab are imperialist creations and do not represent national divisions. Under these circumstances we can expect a major discussion among U.S. activists. For revolutionary Marxists, the overriding factor must be maintaining a clear focus on the criminal role of the U.S. government and the demand that it end its intervention in the affairs of the Arab peoples. □

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