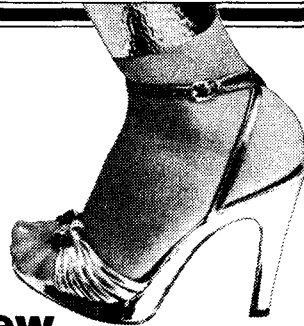


# the freedom socialist

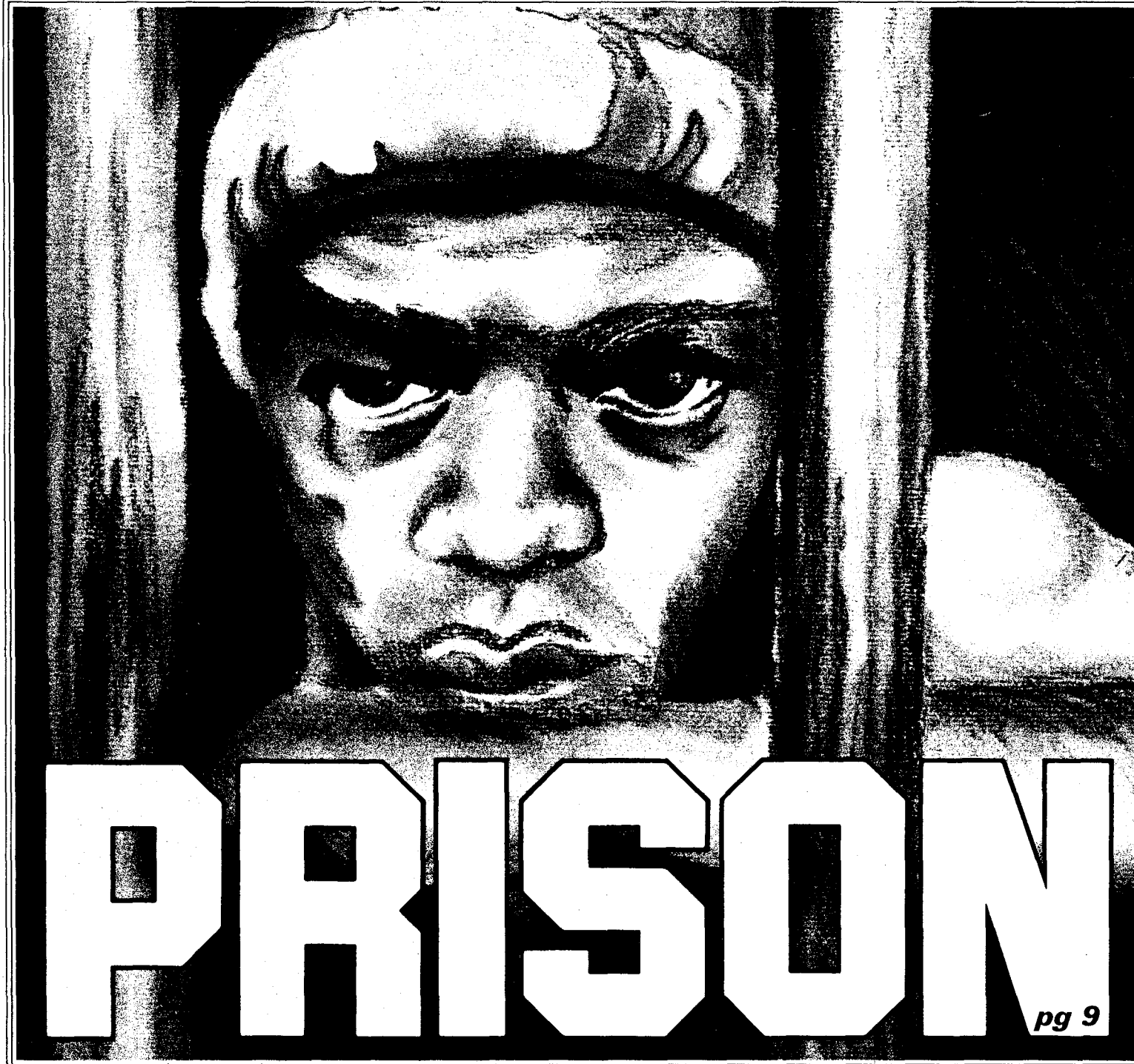
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## The boat people

# The refugee horror show

by Sukey Durham

Putting out to sea in boats stolen from the government, 700,000 Vietnamese have fled their country. Nearly one-quarter have died at sea and 200,000 are in refugee camps. And the boss press, in an orgy of hyperbole, recklessly exploits this flight to proclaim it as proof that the Vietnamese government is worse than the Hitler regime.

In a bizarre, through-the-looking-glass propaganda blitz, the U.S. denounces the government of Vietnam for alleged violations of human rights and finds support from some former antiwar activists.

But the critical questions are seldom addressed: Who are the boat people, and why are they fleeing?

### Vietnam revisited

Vietnam is in deep crisis. Much of the countryside is devastated after 30 years of destruction by defoliant chemicals, napalm, and just plain conventional explosives.

The population is concentrated in cities which suffer a severe food shortage because of the wartime destruction of agricultural land.

Vietnam's economy has been shattered further by a trade embargo imposed by the U.S., by costly military maneuvers on two of its borders, and by the refusal of the U.S. to pay



promised war reparations.

As a result, extremely harsh living conditions prevail and the government is trying to relocate the urban population in New Economic Zones to help increase agricultural production. It is not surprising, therefore, that many of the people privileged under the old regime are now departing.

From 50% to 70% of the boat people are ethnic Chinese, who formed the bulk of the old middle class.

Many Chinese lost their businesses during the 1978 nationalizations of trade and industry, and hate the regime.

Another sizable portion of the boat people is composed of 400,000 army officers, national police, and intelligence agents under the Thieu regime who were neither evacuated as promised by the U.S., nor granted U.S. sanctuary now.

### Debate among the doves

In an "Open Letter to the Socialist Republic of Vietnam" published in five major newspapers on May 30, 1979, pacifist singer Joan Baez and other well-known liberals, intellectuals and artists charged that "the cruelty, violence and oppression practiced by foreign powers in your country for more than a century continue today under the present regime."

Without making the slightest distinction between the revolutionary government of Vietnam and the superpowers of world imperialism, the signers claim that "for many, life is hell

and death is prayed for" and call on Vietnam to uphold the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Baez also complained she was "used" by the Left during the Vietnam War.

The letter provoked instant condemnation from former antiwar

hands of historic guilt, discredit the Vietnamese revolution, disorient the revolution in Indo-China, justify State Department rejection of diplomatic relations with Vietnam, and win public support for its next war.

The callous refusal to help rebuild Vietnam and alleviate harsh conditions there is *directly responsible* for the

***The cause of the refugee problem is the White House itself. Callous refusal to help rebuild Vietnam and alleviate harsh conditions is directly responsible for the suffering of millions.***

leaders Jane Fonda, Dave Dellinger, Abbie Hoffman, and Tom Hayden.

In the June 29 issue of *Seven Days*, Dellinger writes, "By lining up uncritically behind wildly inflated charges from discredited sources, [Baez has] made it easier for the U.S. to continue its present policies of denying aid to Vietnam."

He says further that the world bourgeois press used by Baez as sources received their information from Doan Van Toai, a Vietnamese who is reputed to have close ties to the CIA.

### No more Vietnams!

The U.S. ruling class, aided by Baez and Co., is attempting to use the plight of the boat people to wash its own

suffering of millions and exacerbates the refugee problem.

Faced with the downward spiral of its own economy, plagued by inflation and recession, U.S. capitalism needs a new war to save itself from collapse. The economic and political war against Vietnam is designed to justify the Vietnamese shooting war in retrospect, and to lay the moral groundwork for another.

The cause of the refugee problem is the White House itself. Workers must demand that the government immediately fulfill the task of rebuilding Vietnam and opening the doors of the USA to all immigrants regardless of their origin.

The Vietnamese war is far from finished. ■

## Sexism and the Black woman

by Tom Boot

In writing *Black Macho and the Myth of the Superwoman*, Michele Wallace sparked a long overdue reality-check into Black sexual politics. Though fragile male egos may be fractured, the book has exposed sexism in the Black community and shown how male chauvinism undermines the unity of men and women against racism and sexism.

By creating a much-needed public dialogue among Black women, and between Black women and men, Wallace is helping to regenerate Black solidarity and the rebuilding of a radicalized Black Power movement.

The struggle for Black liberation is only beginning to re-emerge from the demise of the civil rights era and the Black rebellion of the '60s. And a prime reason for the ebbtide of the movement was the leadership of the reformist reverends who tended to ignore, discount, and discourage the leadership of Black women.

The raised fist of Black Power was an assertion of individualistic and collective Black *manhood*. Adopting the supremacist model of manhood



Madlyne Scott (l) and Kathy Saadat, *Black socialist feminists, address a Seattle public forum on Black Macho and the Myth of the Superwoman.*

provided by the dominant white culture, Black men demanded general rather than human rights. The white establishment pushed the Moynihan myth that the source of ghetto poverty was the domineering, "matriarchal" role of Black women, which "destroyed" the Black family.

Black men bought this capitalist sociology. And Black women, hurt and alienated by this terrible injustice and by the disloyalty and limited vision of struggle that it implied, generally retreated.

The denigration and subjugation of

Black women is not new.

Amy Garvey, a Black feminist and liberation movement leader, and wife of Marcus Garvey, wrote in 1923, "Be not discouraged, Black women of the world, but push forward, regardless of the lack of appreciation shown you. A race must be saved, a country redeemed, and unless you strengthen the leadership of vacillating Black men, we will remain marking time until we will be forced to subservency or extermination."

Her historic insights can no longer be ignored. The oppressive

experiences of sexism at the hands of both whites and Blacks are etched indelibly in the mind and spirit of Black women and sensitive Black men.

It is no wonder that Rosa Parks became the revolutionary catalyst and symbol of the civil rights struggle. Rosa Parks' double burden pushed her beyond the single-issue reformism of the Black leadership, and all alone, she defied the entrenched, racist system. Bravery and audacity like hers will resurrect the shattered glory of Black defiance and impel it to leadership of the combined liberation movements.

Those who relegate the struggle of Black women and Black lesbians and gays to second place, who pass off the feminist movement as "divisive" and irrelevant to the struggle against racism—take another look!

The struggle for Black liberation is tied to the defeat of private property, racism, and *sexism*. All Blacks must carefully examine what Black sexism is all about, how sexism historically has been a divisive element in the struggle, how the elimination of this oppression can reinvigorate the movement.

The Black woman is determined not to be the private property and pawn of any man. She is tired of being an object for gratification, exploitation, manipulation, or assault. When her burning demand for equality allies with the struggles of all women, gays, workers, and people of color, the stage will be set for the coming revolution.

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After escape from prison and recapture, Indian leader Leonard Peltier faces grave dangers from the feds. Angelica Merlino reports.

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Moslem women in Central Asia led the way to socialist progress there after the 1917 Russian Revolution. But sexism and Stalinism wiped out their enormous accomplishments. Stephan Kass reviews the book.



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### MANHATTAN

Woody Allen's film is the epitome of cultural chic, but Karen Brodine asks him to turn his camera on those who want to change not only themselves but the world.

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In gross violation of labor laws, garment production bosses in southern California perpetrate the super-exploitation of women of color, many of them undocumented workers. Stephen Durham reports from Los Angeles.



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## freedom socialist

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## Letters

### Glad tidings

Please send me a 2-year sub. Your paper makes a valuable contribution to revolutionary Marxist politics. It is also very well produced. We will find it useful in our many debates on the relationship between revolutionary organizations and the movements of the oppressed.

**Robbie Mahood  
Revolutionary Workers League  
Canadian Section of the  
Fourth International  
Regina, Saskatchewan**

### We accept tips

The Summer issue is fabulous. Please renew my sub and keep the change. Thanks for printing such a fine socialist feminist paper, full of interest and excitement.

Enthusiastically,  
**Nancy Stolov  
Olympia, Washington**

### Feminists of color

We are planning a **Radical Third World Feminists' Anthology: A Woman to Woman Dialogue** of essays by women of color on their perspectives of the Feminist Movement. We want to express to all women—and especially white-middle-class women—the experiences which divide us as feminists and to examine intolerance, prejudice, and denial of differences within the feminist movement. We intend to come to terms with the silence among us and eventually dissolve the divisions. We want to create a definition that expands what "feminist" means to us. Third World women will be the only ones to select and edit for this anthology. Deadline is October 15, 1979. 2000-3000 word limit.

Mail with stamped, self-addressed envelope to Gloria Anzaldúa, 948 Noe St., San Francisco, California 94114.  
**Cherrie Moraga Lawrence,  
Gloria Anzaldúa, and Friends**

■ The National Council of Negro Women, Inc. will sponsor the first national scholarly research conference on "Black Women: An Historical Perspective," on November 12-13, 1979 at the Shoreham-American Hotel in Washington, D.C. The conference coincides with the opening of the National Archives for Black Women's History and the Mary McLeod Bethune Memorial Museum.

Participating in this conference are many of the nation's most distinguished scholars. NCNW plans to publish a selected number of conference papers in the relaunched *African American Woman's Journal*. Persons, organizations, and institutions are invited.  
**Sheila Gardner, Conference Coordinator, NCNW Research Conference, 1318 Vermont Avenue N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005, (202) 332-9202**

### From the women's prison

The *Freedom Socialist* is a very good example of where our interests lie. It is extremely rewarding to expand our knowledge of our brothers and sisters.

I am currently the President of *Las Hermanas* group here. We seek more active and consistent community support, and need books and newspapers, including gay materials.

We strongly need more people like you in our corner! Thank you.  
**Alicia Zwiag, for Las Hermanas Purdy Treatment Center  
Gig Harbor, Washington 98335**

### South seas voyage

On some South sea islands I recently visited, the schools are in the hands of the Mormons and the Seventh Day Adventists. Houses frequently lack plumbing and electricity. And the cost of living on the French islands is very high.

In Australia and New Zealand, prices are higher than here in the USA. Comparable housing in Australia and New Zealand is higher, clothing and food reasonable.

The Australian longshoreman's pension is just about enough to keep them going. Medicare and hospital benefits are not up to ours. There was a big medical scandal while I was there, with the politicians trying to make the people pay more into Medicare.

I am sending you a check for the Freeway Hall Eviction Fund.  
**Maurice Anderson  
Hot Springs, California**

### Peddling our paper

I'm thrilled with the latest *Freedom Socialist*. Especially the greater international coverage, expanded humor (hats off to Ms. Tami and Hagar the Horrible), and incisive reporting on *all* the crucial issues that workers at my job and on the bus are discussing (gas shortage, nuclear power, Nicaragua, Iran, Middle East, fishing wars). I'm plumb pleased and proud to peddle this great paper.

**Jamie Bevson  
Portland, Oregon**

### A voice from 4-wing

Please put me down for a subscription. I'm sure the paper will carry an honest account of the happenings at Walla Walla. Every few days the institution takes something else away from the inmates, to keep our anger at blow-up level . . . 500 were sick and nothing was done for them . . . The guards eat food sent to us in the wings . . . and throw our food on the floors . . . there is not much we can do about it . . .

If this population is to come thru this struggle, we have to support each other as one . . . If we are together and not straddling the line, the State will have to listen to our side and act on our concerns before they can end this lockdown.

The inmates of 4-wing do have concern for each other. We hope to pull together.

**William F. Wynn, 127557  
Walla Walla Prison**

### Abortion rights conference

A Washington State Pro-Choice Conference for Reproductive Rights has been called by the Yakima Self-Help Organization. It will be held November 3-4 at the Central Washington University campus in Ellensburg, and will confront the continuing and systematic efforts of anti-abortion groups to undermine the rights of women. National speakers and a variety of workshops will be featured. Contact the Yakima Self-Help Organization, 804 So. 6th Ave., Yakima, WA 98902, (509) 575-6422.

**Deborah J. Lazaldi  
Yakima, Washington**

### Feel better now?

. . . During the Shah's rule, the large Iranian exile and student community carried on an exemplary struggle, in spite of their precarious position as exiles, almost entirely alone. Even during the final struggle in 1978, most of the left aped their bourgeoisie in first downplaying the events, and then slandering them as a feudal and clerical reaction against the "progressive" Shah. And that racist attitude is still dominant on the left—witness your (bourgeois press) cartoon in the last issue, the absurd "death or the veil" propaganda spread by the bourgeois press and the bourgeois feminists masquerading as socialists, such as your sisters in the Spartacist League whose "analysis" you so willingly adopt.

Like all the other opportunists, even the CP, you hail the revolution now that its depth can no longer be hidden. But you still distort and slander it in a maternalistic fashion—what absurdity about the "centrality of women's leadership." Like any other revolution, the main lesson is solidarity—the Iranian women are inspiring. But they are not feminists, they are revolutionaries. You are just like your daddies, carrying the white women's burden of educating those backward women in colonial countries. This "women's leadership" nonsense is just a call for the maintenance of the status quo, an alliance with the ruling class until some theoretical time when women can lead. It's a reflection of Patty Hearst-style spoiled brats whose daddies always let them have their way—and who can't see why they shouldn't have their way on the left (which they just recently discovered) in the same manner.

. . . Your irresponsible yellow journalism could only come from a spoiled rich girl bourgeois feminist with no experience in politics.

. . . support Big Nurse or else, that's the FSP . . . Feminists with contempt for proletarian democracy . . . just like other closet ("Israel has a right to security") Zionist feminists on the make in the SWP, *Guardian*, etc.; *especially* the Spartacist League, which is only the FSP with a national organization. Or, better, the FSP is just a semi-autonomous Seattle branch of the SL—the main difference that the SL is more of a closet-oriented organization at least in theory, paying more attention to the need to cover its capitulations to Zionism, racism, bourgeois feminism, etc. with some kind of artificial resort to orthodoxy.

**I won't be renewing my sub.  
Mark Richey  
Oakland, California**

*We should think not.*

*Readers are encouraged to submit letters, news stories, commentary, cartoons, graphics, photographs, and pertinent information on world and national affairs for publication. All material will be carefully considered by the Editorial Board.*

*Se comunica a los señores lectores que nos pueden enviar para publicación cartas con sus opiniones, nuevos relatos, comentarios, caricaturas, gráficos, fotografías, y toda clase de información sobre sucesos nacionales o extranjeros. Todo el material que nos sea enviado será cuidadosamente considerado por el Consejo de nuestra Editorial.*



# International roundup

*Binding all countries together with its mode of production and its commerce, capitalism has converted the whole world into a single economic and political organism. —Leon Trotsky*

## Cuba

**I**n a tepid replay of the 1961 missile crisis, Capitol Hill is abuzz with bluff and bluster over the alleged presence of 3000

Soviet ground troops in Cuba. The Carter administration acknowledged the existence of the troops just before the opening of the conference of nonaligned nations in Havana. What a coincidence! Senators up for reelection pounced upon the issue to parade their get-tough-with-the-Soviets bravado while Carter played the pacifier role.

Nobody mentioned, of course, that the U.S. owns and maintains a military base in Guantanamo, Cuba, and has combat troops encircling the Soviet Union—in West Germany, Turkey, Greece, Japan, and South Korea.

Cold war hypocrisy makes for hot politicking. ■

## Ireland

**A**ssassinations carried out by the Irish Republican Army have spotlighted Northern Ireland's fight for independence and provoked Margaret Thatcher, the Tory Prime Minister of Britain, to vow "war" on the IRA.

IRA guerrillas took credit for the August 27 executions of Lord Louis Mountbatten and two members of his family. Mountbatten, a cousin of Queen Elizabeth, was England's last Viceroy of India and a famous World War II naval commander.

In a separate incident, 18 British soldiers near the British border in Northern Ireland were ambushed and killed by IRA guerrillas.

On the day of Mountbatten's funeral, Thatcher met with John Lynch, Prime Minister of the Irish Republic, who agreed to share intelligence information on the IRA and to help Britain "stamp out terrorism."

The IRA has announced that "many more deaths" will follow if the British do not pull out all troops from occupied Northern Ireland and grant independence to that oppressed land, still a colony under the thumb—and thumbscrews—of British imperialism.

## Namibia

**N**amibia, the African nation bordered on the south by South Africa and on the north by Angola, is the scene of heavy fighting between liberation forces and South African troops.

South Africa governs Namibia but is losing political ground and scrambling for a Zimbabwe-style "solution" to the demand for independence.

A tenuous coalition of pro-South African puppet organizations is desperately trying to set up a

## Save Iranian Trotskyists

**A** tidal wave of repression launched by the Khomeini/Bazargan government of Iran has resulted in the executions of at least 70 Kurdish leaders and an unknown number of women and gays. Thousands of anti-Shah fighters, including 14 members of the Trotskyist Iranian Socialist Workers Party (HKS), have been imprisoned. Twelve of the 14 HKS leaders face death, and world protest is being mobilized in their defense.

The Kurdish leaders were summarily executed during heavy fighting against Islamic troops.

Women have been executed for adultery and prostitution; one woman was executed for adultery while her lover was given 100 lashes.

Freedom fighters risk jail and censorship of their press under the sweeping crackdown on all dissidence and on the radical Left.

Twelve HKS members were condemned to death and two to life imprisonment for advocating socialism

in Iran, but an international protest campaign has apparently stayed the executions.

A demonstration of 3000 in Paris demanded freedom for the HKS prisoners and all anti-Shah fighters and an immediate halt to the execution of women, gays, and national minority leaders. Protest is growing worldwide.

**Protest the imprisonment of anti-Shah fighters!** Condemn the official murders of Kurdish leaders and women! Demand that the lives of HKS members be spared!

**Launch a protest campaign in your area!** Show Khomeini that people all over the world identify with the advance of revolution in Iran. Call on the Left, unions, and all human rights organizations to join in picket lines and demonstrations to protect political freedom in Iran!

**Send telegrams immediately to:** Ayatollah Ruhollan Khomeini, Qum, Iran; Prime Minister Mehdi Bazargan, Tehran, Iran; Hassan Nazih, Director, National Iranian Oil Company, Takht Jamshid Avenue, Tehran, Iran; and the Iranian Consulate, Washington, D.C.



**Khomeini's soldiers execute Kurdish nationalists in northwest Iran.**

legitimate-appearing government for Namibia. Meanwhile, South African troops are stationed there and vicious attacks have been launched against the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO), the military arm of the independence movement.

South Africa has arrested and jailed thousands of SWAPO members under cover of the "Terrorism Act," conducts raids against SWAPO bases, and seeks the intervention of UN "peacekeeping" forces to oversee South African-run elections.

Earlier this year, South Africa sent a gang of hoodlums into SWAPO offices to ransack equipment and steal information. But the SWAPO guerrilla fighters are intensifying their armed struggle, using heavy weapons and

taking the offensive against South African bases and military installations.

The increasing number of South African casualties resulting from engagements with SWAPO forces serves warning on the imperialists and all supporters of apartheid that no freedom fighters in Southern Africa will slacken until they overcome. ■

## Afghanistan

**F**ormer military officers, religious figures, and dispossessed landlords, supported by U.S. imperialism, are spearheading a reactionary movement in Afghanistan which threatens the Kremlin-backed regime of President Hafizullah Amin. Amin took office in mid-September after former President Nur Mohammed Taraki was deposed.

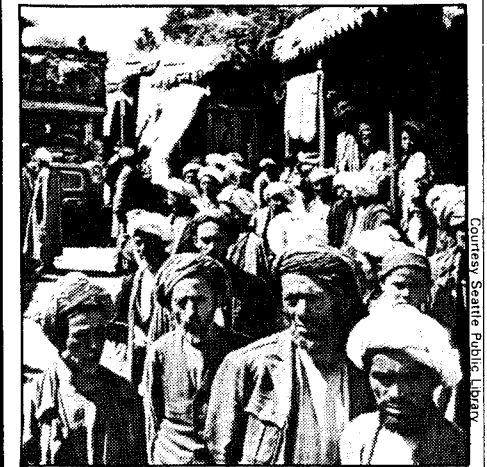
Taraki came to power in 1978 through a coup engineered by the Afghan Communist Party. But the serious rebel threat evidently produced an internal split in the party which was resolved by a violent seizure of power by Amin.

Since its rise to power, the Afghan Communist Party has directed a program of major social reform.

Extensive land reform is underway, peasants' debts have been cancelled, women's status is improving, trade

unions are legalized, and schools and medical centers have been built.

The Communist regime has won widespread support, but the successful reforms infuriated the Right, which organized a counter-



revolution, **aided by the Khomeini/Bazargan government in Iran** and the military junta of General Zia ul-Haq in Pakistan.

The heaviest fighting has taken place along Afghanistan's eastern border with Pakistan, which is the base for the two major rightist groups, the Islamic Party and the Islamic Brotherhood. The Pakistani junta has served as a go-between to channel military aid from the U.S. to the insurgents.

The Iranian Islamic regime condemns the government as anti-Islamic. Khomeini/Bazargan fear the popular social reforms in Afghanistan, which pose a threat to their own regime.

The Communist government has achieved fundamental social and economic advances. Despite its Stalinist origins and support, it is a progressive regime. But it is in danger of defeat, and if toppled, the reversal of social reform would deal a severe blow to Afghan workers and peasants, and adversely affect the advance of revolution in neighboring Iran. ■

## ... Nicaragua

from back page

The reconstruction of a capitalist Nicaragua can only take place through repressing and exploiting the urban working class and the rural peasantry. And the native capitalists, in concert with imperialism, are prepared as always to use the most vicious means at their disposal in order to insure profits.

7,000 National Guard troops, organized in exile, await a chance to reenter the country, and the capitalist class will not hesitate to call on them to save privately-owned industry.

The army of workers and peasants is presently controlled by the FSLN, and the leftists in the government have powerful positions. But the Nicaraguan capitalists are Somoza in disguise, and the danger of counterrevolution is real.

To save itself, and to promote revolution throughout Latin America, Nicaragua will have to nationalize all industry, institute a monopoly of foreign trade, and establish a workers state.

**Forward to a Socialist Nicaragua!** ■



Marcus Books



Interlandi® 1979, Los Angeles Times

# Carter's born-again imperialism



by Monica Hill

"For the first time in the history of our country a majority of our people believe that the next five years will be worse than the last five years. Two-thirds of our people do not even vote. The productivity of American workers is actually dropping and the willingness of Americans to save for the future has fallen below that of all other people in the Western world. As you know there is a growing disrespect for government and for churches and for schools, the news media and other institutions . . ."

Thus spake President Jimmy Carter in July. And then he exhorted the faithful to renew their loyalty-oaths to the system and assured the doubters that all is for the best in this best of all possible worlds.

Jimmy scrambled to try to restore confidence in a decaying economy and embellish his tarnished image. He imposed "get-tough" changes in his administration, told us the energy crisis was insoluble, and took a riverboat cruise up the Mississippi to meet the folks.

## Slick oil

Carter blamed the crisis on everything except capitalism. He prated about "self-indulgent consumption" and a "crisis in confidence . . . that strikes at the very heart and soul and spirit of our national will."

Spirit, shmirit—the problem is the economic system and the oil baron oligarchy. But Carter deflected blame from U.S. oil companies: "Our neck is stretched over the fence and OPEC (Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries) has the knife." And his brilliant solution was—*synthetic oil* to be produced at taxpayer expense for the greater profit of the energy moguls.

## Cabinet roulette

All eleven members of the cabinet were forced to offer their resignations. Carter axed five of them.

Joseph Califano and Brock Adams, the last vestiges of liberalism, departed, replaced by pragmatic Patricia Harris of HUD and former Portland Mayor Neil Goldschmidt.

Treasury Secretary Michael Blumenthal's exit enabled Carter to rid himself of an embarrassing advocate of oil deregulation and \$1.60 a gallon gasoline, and gain an advocate of tight money—Federal Reserve Chairman G. William Miller, who intends to stem inflation and save the dollar by declaring unemployment a national asset and nourishing it.

The Department of Energy's James Schlesinger was also too publicly linked to Big Oil. His substitute is a Coca-Cola executive with a Pentagon past, Charles Duncan, who will tout Carter's synthetic fuel program.

And Attorney General Griffin Bell, noted for his attacks on civil liberties, chose Benjamin Civiletti to follow in his own footsteps.

Georgia boor Hamilton Jordan became chief of White House staff, in position to insure an all-out focus on

the Carter renomination.

## Salvation by sanctity

Carter's shenanigans aim to salvage capitalism at any cost.

After renewing our faltering faith in church, state, the family and the boss, we must tighten our belts and work faster and harder. We are to walk, not ride; to freeze in winter and suffocate in summer; to perish trustfully from nuclear radiation funded by our taxes.

**Will Americans jettison their standard of living by swallowing spiritual solutions to material problems?**

A Harris poll in August reported Ted Kennedy still leading Carter 2-to-1, and a *Los Angeles Times* reporter wryly commented: "Many Americans, frustrated by gas lines and fearful of heating oil shortages, may not readily see the connection between morality and petroleum."

## To be Young and Black

Carter is trying to make political capital out of the smoldering antagonisms that divide the country. An illustration is the resignation of UN

Ambassador Andrew Young.

An articulate, dynamic Southern Black, Young was a token sop to the liberals. His criticism of U.S. hypocrisy on human rights and his challenge of Mideast policy exposed the absurdities of the diplomatic game. And Young's voice is heard by a vast constituency of disaffected Blacks.

Young's "forbidden" talks with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) were cynically exposed, and he was dumped by Carter's State Department after the expected Zionist outcry. Now Blacks and Jews are being goaded to leap at each other's throats—to conveniently ease the pressure on the Administration. Carter can sit back and let public opinion coalesce in support of Young before Carter adjusts his Mideast policy.

Andy Young is probably a conscious scapegoat who knows he will be "vindicated." The Zionist state of Israel can no longer be maintained as imperialism's watchdog over revolution in the Middle East. The human and political rights of the displaced millions of Palestinians have got to be recognized. And Black

Americans, who have historically identified with the Jews and all oppressed peoples, were quick to grasp the degeneration of Palestine's Jews into Israeli Zionists who drove the Arabs off their own land.

Blacks also refuse to swallow the canard that all Jews are Zionists (defenders of a unilaterally Jewish state in Palestine) or that anti-Zionism equals anti-Semitism.

Jewish and Black workers need to coalesce once again around their common needs, which include a decent respect for the opinions of the Palestinian resistance fighters.

## More trouble ahead

The domestic spectacle is intrinsically linked to the international arena, where the ricocheting value of the dollar dropped sharply after Carter's sham shakeup. As the contagion of world revolution shrinks once-captive U.S. markets, corporate bosses are turning with a vengeance on the U.S. worker to extract compensatory profits.

The U.S. ruling class, under fire from anxious workers, retirees and the jobless, charges Carter with administrative ineptitude as a prelude to their imposition of an authoritarian regime. But no president from either capitalist party could revive the U.S. economy. The Vietnam War is still unpaid for, and investment in a major new war for new markets, with its military and political uncertainties, is not likely to appeal to the bankers at the moment.

## Resurrection versus light

Carter's declaration of hardships to come has increased the polarity between right and left.

Stirred by Carter's official blessing on the right, a growing number of Americans are moving leftward. People of color, women, unionists, gays, students and elders are demanding a sane social system and are fed up with a foreign policy that is *always on the wrong side*.

The liberals, in the face of reaction, historically disassociate themselves from radicals, accept counterfeit concessions, and betray everybody's rights. But the deep anger in America today gives the Left a golden opportunity to strengthen every resistance movement in the country and mobilize them for a unified confrontation with reaction.

Carter is washed up. Playboy Kennedy is no alternative. Radicals can intensify the bourgeois crisis by providing a counter-pole of revolutionary leadership. Otherwise, the "strongman" Bonapartist solution looms ahead. Now is the time for the Left. ■

## Performance evaluation of Pres. Jimmy

by Eldon Durham

### Promises

1. To curb the abuses of big business and government.
2. That human rights will be "the soul of our foreign policy."
3. To cut defense spending.
4. Moral leadership.
5. Full employment.
6. Due recognition to Blacks.
7. A national health program.
8. A national energy policy.
9. Women's rights.
10. A fair shake for labor.
11. Help the people.

### Comment

- He is Big Oil's Little Boy. The White House staff is gargantuan and a great act for Burlesque.
- May be, but the *body* of that policy is support to tyrants, torturers, tycoons, and border cops for undocumented workers. Plus harassment of Soviet ballerinas. P.S. Whatever happened to reparations for Vietnam?
- Ha, ha, ha. He learned to stop worrying and loves the neutron bomb.
- The Georgia Mafia, Ham Jordan, Bert Lance, etc.
- Even he admits to 6%—but it's 42% for Black youth alone. Not to mention Indians, Chicanos, Puerto Ricans, women, auto workers, teachers, English majors, and the like.
- Like Andy Young? Well, then, *who*? And what ever happened to affirmative action?
- Oh?
- Sure. Bite the bullet, don heavy sweaters, join the gas lines for \$2 per gallon unleaded, worship at the shrine of his "moral equivalent of war," and take up residence at Three Mile Island.
- Bye-bye, Bella. Bye-bye, abortion. Bye-bye, ERA. Hello, *chador*.
- See the 8% wage freeze, the miners' strike injunction, union-busting, the right-to-work South.
- You're fired.

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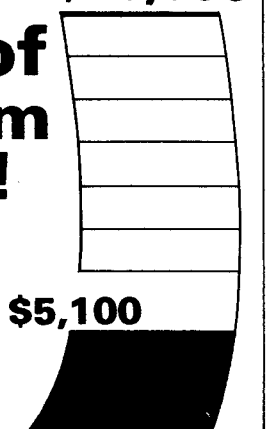
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60th  
anniversary

# Seattle general strike

by Meg White

**A** shining moment in American labor history is being commemorated this year with the 60th anniversary of the

great Seattle General Strike. On February 6, 1919, industry screeched to a halt. "All of Seattle was silenced as organized labor went out in support of the 35,000 shipyard workers this week," said the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*.

The first and only general strike in American history erupted after World War I when the federal government cut back ship production. Shipyard wages were frozen and angry Seattle yardworkers, affiliated with the Metal Trades Council, struck for higher wages. On 21 January, 35,000 workers were out, and they appealed to the Central Labor Council for a supportive strike by Seattle labor.

When Anna Louise Strong, editorial writer for the militant labor daily, *The Union Record*, reprinted a speech by Lenin on workers control of production, most of the local bourgeoisie promptly fled to Oregon hotels and others bought riot insurance

and stored arms for a feared Bolshevik takeover.

IWW and Socialist Party members were influential in many unions, and they pushed for a general strike. One by one, 110 unions voted to strike in support of the yardworkers' demands and soon the citywide strike of 100,000 workers—60,000 union and 40,000 unorganized—was underway.

The bourgeois press whipped up hysteria over an alleged conspiracy between the Soviet Union and Seattle labor, and screamed for the army to squelch the strike. But while the headlines raged about "anarchy," efficient workers committees distributed food and maintained all emergency services.

The strike was won by the Committee of Fifteen, delegated by a General Strike Committee. And a noticeable calm descended on the city, due to the sure hand of the labor guards who patrolled the streets and saw to it that nobody believed Mayor Hanson's charge that strikers were cutting off water and electricity.

But the pressures against the

strikers were very strong. The international offices of the unions threatened to revoke local charters, and the more conservative local executive board members wavered. The Committee of Fifteen capitulated and recommended ending the strike, and the back of the movement was broken. The strike petered out on February 12.

With the strike over, the shipyard owners were ready to reopen the yards to union and non-union labor alike. But the federal shipping board insisted on union labor at low, government-fixed wages. The yardworkers refused to return and their lonely strike dragged on for five more weeks.

The government withdrew all contracts and stopped the steel supply to the yards, and not until January, 1920 did the yards reopen—with a mere 800 workers.

The demands of the shipyard workers were not won by the general strike. But most unionists were elated by the dynamic, six-day demonstration of workingclass solidarity and control of production and services. The strike

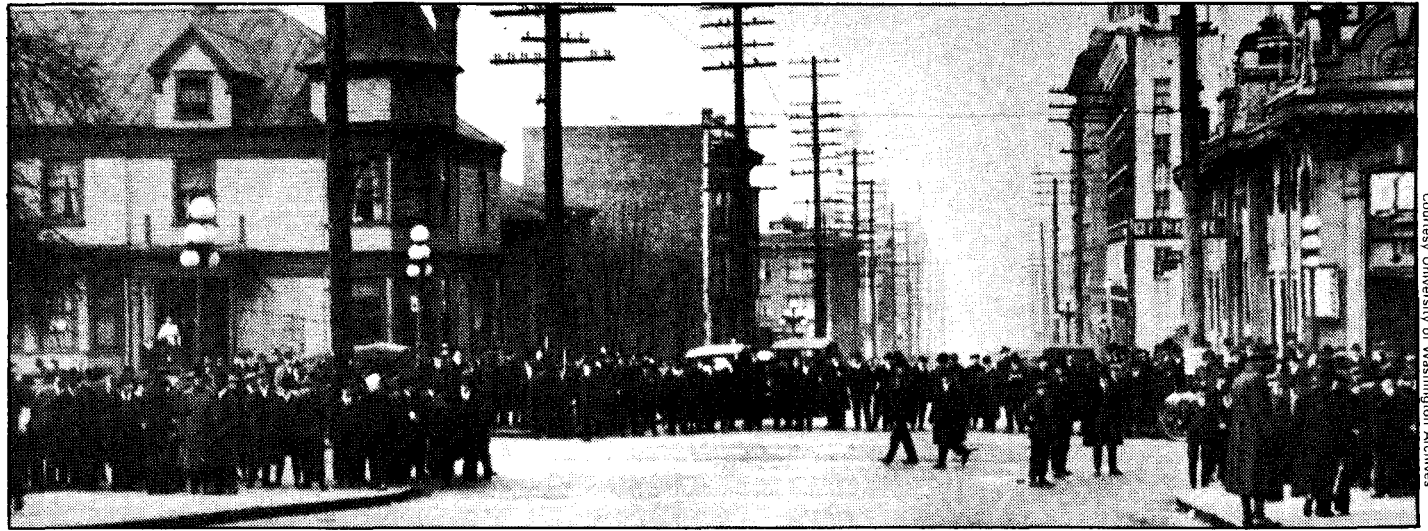
had a tremendous impact on national politics, and on the swift growth of unionism and radicalism in the '20s and '30s.

The memory of those explosive days in Seattle is still fresh, whether viewed as a unique historic event or as a thrilling dress rehearsal for American labor. ■

Meg White is an apprentice cabinet-maker and student of labor history.



Anna Louise Strong



Courtesy University of Washington Archives

# Sweating in Sun City

by Stephen Durham

**W**omen workers in Southern California's huge apparel industry are slaving in sweatshops just as their predecessors did in New York City 70 years ago.

Cheap labor and the proliferation of nonunion shops have attracted droves of apparel manufacturers, who, like vultures, descend on Los Angeles to exploit a workforce comprised mainly of Chicano/Mexicano, Black, Asian and undocumented laborers.

Los Angeles has become the country's second largest and fastest growing center of garment production.

But while Congress and the state legislature set the minimum wage, prohibit child labor, and assert health and safety standards, garment workers are producing quality clothes in hundreds of small shops that operate in blatant violation of every wage, safety and health code on the books.

## Skirting the law

Most of Los Angeles' 98,000 garment workers are women working in shops that average between 15 and 20 employees. A system of *contractual* labor prevails, which grossly exploits undocumented workers, undermines the union, and frees the manufacturers from compliance with labor laws.

The manufacturer, in this ruthless system, is responsible only for designing and cutting the garment. He then bargains with a labor contractor for the machine-sewing of each article. This middleman operates a sweatshop based on grueling piece-work.

Most of these contractors are middleclass, money-hungry immigrants from Latin America and Asia who are fleeing revolution or a dictator's repression. Armed with their life savings, they become willing stooges for garment bosses and chief marshalls for

exploiting the hapless, undocumented women and men from Mexico and Central America.

## Pennies for stitches

Garments sewn for 80 cents in wages are sold in stores for over \$40!

Ironers, usually elderly, earn 15 cents per garment; the younger thread trimmers earn 4 to 6 cents.

An undocumented Mexicana is paid between 10 and 12 cents per item for sewing pockets on men's pants.

"I have to work 11 hours a day, six days a week, when I can," she says. "I process 500 to 700 garments a day to earn \$5,000 a year."

The threat of deportation prevents her from protesting the lack of unemployment compensation when there is no work.

## The bosses are the criminals

The International Ladies' Garment Workers Union (ILGWU) has mounted a battle against the open shop bosses.

After 40 women presented the union with 1500 payroll stubs documenting wages as low as 17 cents per hour, the union pressured the state Division of Labor Standards and Enforcement to investigate violations of labor laws in the garment industry.

Twelve investigators found that more than 90% of the labor contractors violated the minimum wage law and labor codes, and \$42,000 in fines were levied for child labor violations alone!

Such intolerable conditions are placing garment workers once again on the front lines of class struggle. These sorely exploited minority women workers are further oppressed by rightwing hysteria against "aliens," women, gays and unions, yet their courage and resistance to economic and social brutality will one day vanquish the garment czars.

In their fight for survival, these women will design, cut and sew the death shroud for the *coyotes* who now prosper from the cheap labor of the super-subjugated. ■



Doug Barnes/Freedom Socialist

# BART lockout

Dear Editor,

The Bay Area Rapid Transit District has shut down, claiming a strike, but the workers call it a lockout. Gates are chained and patrolled by armed company guards.

Union contracts with Service Employees International Union Local 390 and Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1555 expired on June 30, whereupon management introduced interim rules mandating forced overtime and no sick pay until the *fourth* day of illness. 300 SEIU workers were suspended shortly after for "sabotage," refusal to work overtime, and attending union meetings during work hours.

On July 11, workers overwhelmingly rejected a "final offer." **BART workers have not had a raise in six years.** They have dropped their 10% wage increase demand but insist on the cost-of-living escalator they won in 1973. Management rejects the escalator and offers a 3-5% yearly raise.

Last spring, management *doubled* the time-in-use between maintenance checkups for transit cars, and breakdowns escalated. Despite driver protests, BART assigned relatively unskilled supervisors to replace suspended mechanics, and soon only 125 of 450 cars were operational. On August 30, after brakes caught fire on cars in the Berkeley Hills Tunnel, many drivers called in sick rather than risk death in a possible major tunnel disaster similar to the devastating BART crash of a few years ago. With only ten cars operating, management closed BART and posted guards.

1200 SEIU workers and 400 ATU drivers, claiming an illegal lockout, have applied for unemployment benefits.

Since the shutdown, there has been only one negotiating session. The union officials proposed that the rank and file should accept any and all overtime hours necessary to restart the system; drop the demand to rescind the 300 suspensions and handle them individually instead; and they urged the formation of a fact-finding committee.

BART steadfastly refuses arbitration and union officials continue to balk at calling a real strike, in fear of losing control of the angry rank and file.

**Sukey Durham**  
San Francisco, California



Marcel Hatch/Freedom Socialist

# Public study launched on "Natural Superiority of Women"

by Sandy Nelson

**A**re women, by virtue of natural/biological traits or social status, superior to men? And what are the political implications of asserting women's superiority?

Two conflicting approaches to these thorny questions emerged when 130 women and men assembled in Seattle's Freeway Hall on August 30 to examine the controversial issue.

Dr. Jennifer James, anthropologist and associate professor of psychiatry at the University of Washington, said that males were always dominant over women because of strength and speed. Only modern technology, by eliminating constant pregnancy and childbirth, can liberate women.

Three other panelists also disclaimed female superiority. Dr. Sheila Johansson, historian and research associate at the UW Center for Demography; Dr. Daniel Greenblatt, UW instructor in Women Studies; and Janie Pulsifer, master's degree candidate in human sexuality, maintained that the notion of a superior sex is scientifically undeterminable and politically divisive. Greenblatt said that objective truth is unknowable because any

interpretation of data is subjective.

Speakers from the audience contended that women were socially superior to men in the past as evidenced by the equality that characterized matrilinear communal societies, and are socially superior today by virtue of their drive for radical change; that women enjoy clear biological advantages over men in terms of health, longevity and resilience; that the question needs to be answered to better understand the social/political status of women and to effect change; that the question can be answered objectively by using scientific evidence.

Said Susan Williams, M.D., of New York Radical Women, "The question is not longevity or strength but who is historically, biologically, socially, and culturally *prepared to lead society forward to the next stage of history*. Women, because of their universal oppression, are in a position to lead the revolution, just as they were the major force in moving humans out of the primitive horde into the beginnings of real civilization."

Patrick Haggerty, a researcher into ancient society, said that modern sex roles do not stem from primitive times when a supposed "mother-child unit" needed males as "protectors and protein providers." *"It was not*

*women who were dependent on men for the groceries, but the other way around,"* he said. "Was it Man the Hunter or *the rise of private property* that led to women's enslavement?"

Angelica Merlino of Portland Radical Women said that Marx and Engels held that the first class division was between women and men. "The essence of our oppression is *economic inequality*," she said.

Joanna Russ, professor of English Literature at the University of Washington and author of feminist science fiction, defended science as the road to truth. "We are hearing linguistics in its most modern permutation—that the real world doesn't exist. But science is not purely subjective—just stick your hand in an electric light socket!"

Clara Fraser, *Freedom Socialist* editor, wondered, "What is so inflammatory and untactical about saying that a specially oppressed group has particular distinctions?" she asked. "Isn't it an insult to men to announce that this concept would drive them away as allies? Superiority doesn't mean the Third Reich but greater responsibility, more work, more giving."

The forum, sponsored by Seattle Radical Women, was the opening gun of a series on the question. ■

## Los derechos a un aborto en peligro

por Lynda Schraufnagel

**L**as feministas de toda la nación manifestarán durante la Semana de Acción por Los Derechos a Aborto los días del 21-28 de octubre para lanzar un contraataque a la campaña terrorística anti-aborto caracterizada por bombas incendiarias, vandalismo y asaltos.

Los anti-aborto son los mismos conglomerados de gente demasiado familiares y bien financiados, extrema derechistas que golpean la Biblia por un lado y odian a todos los que son diferentes incluyendo a los homosexuales, a las madres en la asistencia pública y a la gente de color. Muchos de ellos se oponen a los planes contra conceptivos.

Desde la decisión de la Corte Suprema de 1973 que legalizó el aborto, las fuerzas a Derecho-a-la-Vida han usado cartas histéricas para ganar adeptos producidas por listas de correos a base de computadoras. 60,000 marcharon en Washington, D.C. el pasado 22 de enero en el aniversario de la decisión de la Corte Suprema.

Su victoria más corrosiva hasta el momento fue la Enmienda Hyde de 1977 que prohíbe el uso de dineros federales para los abortos. De esa forma acabaron con los derechos a un aborto para mujeres pobres en todos los estados de la unión con la excepción de ocho estados. Y su más reciente campaña es para los "derechos del feto," prohibiendo el aborto por medio de una enmienda constitucional ya aprobada por 14 estados.

La aprobación popular de los derechos a un aborto aumentaron el año pasado del 53% al 60%, pero la minoría hace el ruido.

### Cenando con el enemigo

Alarmada por el poder de los anti-

aborto, la presidente de NOW, Eleanor Smeal, fue invitada por las patrocinadoras del Derecho-a-la-Vida, a una reunión de "Paz" en febrero.

Ella y las otras conciliadoras discutieron los derechos a la reproducción con las "feministas" anti-aborto y nunca mencionaron la palabra aborto. La reunión fue interrumpida por extremistas mostrando fetos embotellados.

Esto en cambio animó las manifestaciones del Día Internacional de la Mujer en marzo centrados en el tema del aborto. La mas grande fue organizada en Olympia, Washington por una coalición representando a los homosexuales, feministas, a los trabajadores, radicales, y mujeres de color.

### Rosie Jiménez, martyr

La Enmienda Hyde, en efecto, niega el aborto solamente a mujeres empobrecidas, muchas de ellas de color. Las únicas opciones disponibles son la esterilización y las "carnicerías ilegales de los callejones oscuros."

Un abortista ilegal mató a Rosie Jiménez de 27 años de edad que estaba tratando de subsistir con sólo 86 dólares al mes de asistencia pública y un empleo temporal para mantener a su hijo. Con esa miseria también estaba tratando de ir a la escuela.

La respuesta de la Liga Nacional de Acción de los Derechos a un Aborto (NARAL) es una creación de un fondo llamado Jiménez para reemplazar el dinero de Medicaid para los abortos que "generosamente" libera al Congreso del peso de suplir los 40-50 millones de dólares que se necesitan al año.

La muerte de Rosie Jiménez exige una protesta de enojo del mundo entero y un paro a las mortíferas "Derecho-a-la-Vida" para que las mujeres puedan controlar sus propios cuerpos y sus propias mentes. ■

## Malice Aforethought

by Ms. Tami

Wearied by the difficulties of life on the Potomac, Jimmy Carter recently embarked on a cruise to sample life on the Mississippi. But even there he was assailed by the burdens of office.

**Jimmy's first step in ending discrimination against gays was to travel on a stately old riverboat named the "Delta Queen." However, few recognized the enormity of his gesture, and a small band of lesbian-separatists living in a collective outside Eugene, Oregon wrote to demand the boat be renamed the "Delta Amazon."**

*Carter's rhythmic jogging on the wooden decks boomed out his presence like a jungle message drum. Bosses, lemming-like, rushed out to order thousands of workers to line the banks of the Mississippi and get their hands ready for an old-fashioned presidential shakedown—this time in person.*

*Afterward, people discovered they couldn't get home because no gasoline was available, and a city of cars sprang up along the*

*Mississippi, filled with oil deregulation refugees. Frantic calls to Joan Baez were disappointing; she refused to allow them to relocate on her land near Carmel.*

*Jimmy tried to solve this new crisis with a policy that combined austerity with utilization of nature's most renewable resources. Unfortunately, his now-famous "BITE THE BUNNY" speech was largely ignored.*

Thanks to a law requiring the President to be guarded constantly by two men from the Weather Bureau, Jimmy was safely back in Washington before hurricanes compounded the disaster. He immediately entered a marathon race but collapsed while attempting to symbolically outrun inflation.

**Presidential aides are now preparing Jimmy for a trip across Newark, New Jersey on stilts—and everyone is waiting to see what the separatist collective in Oregon will make of that!** ■

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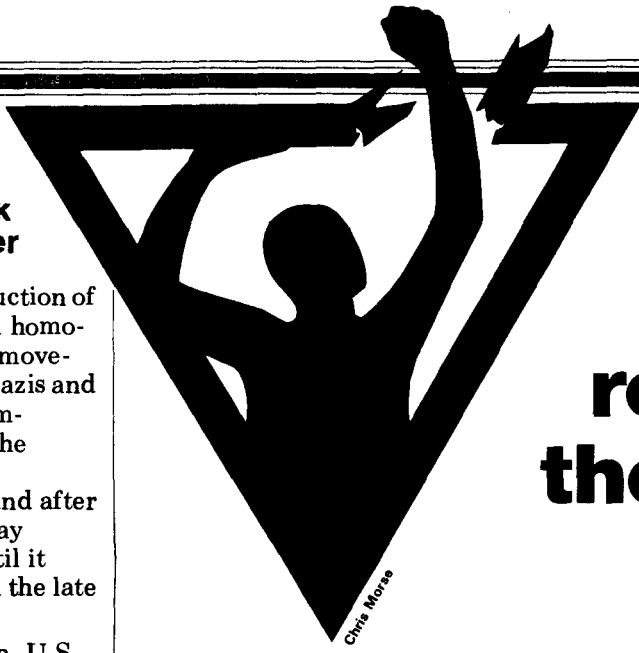
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by Sam Deaderick  
and Tamara Turner



## Gay resistance: the hidden history

Part V

**Long before the Stonewall riots in 1969,  
when "Gay Power!" resounded in the streets of  
Greenwich Village, courageous pioneers braved  
jail, harassment, and scorn to defend homosexuals**

### Emma Goldman, perennial pioneer

The first known American to publicly champion civil rights for gays was the great Russian-born anarchist and feminist Emma Goldman.

When asked in 1900 how she could "dare come out in public for Oscar Wilde in puritan America," she replied, "Nonsense! No daring is required to protest great injustice."

She had to fight to defend her gay liberation views against her anarchist comrades, who feared that open support of homosexuality would harm their cause. This only made her more determined to speak out.

In 1923, Goldman wrote a major article for the *German Yearbook for Sexual Intermediate Types* about

French anarchist and poet Louise Michel, alleged to be a lesbian. Wrote Goldman,

**It is a tragedy . . . that people of a different sexual type are caught in a world which shows so little understanding for homosexuals, is so crassly indifferent to the various gradations of gender and their great significance in life . . . The entire sentencing of Wilde struck me as an act of cruel injustice and repulsive hypocrisy . . ."**

While excoriating society for its persecution of gays, Goldman also denounced the sexism of those who

assumed a woman to be a lesbian simply because she did not fit men's "shopworn requirements of womanhood."

### Repressed inverts

The next documented defense of homosexuality was a 1923 paper, "Studies in Feminine Inversion," by F.W. Stella Browne, published in the *Journal of Sexology and Psychology* in New York.

She blamed society for "the tragedy of the repressed invert" and said that "the homo-sexual impulse . . . has a fully equal right to existence and expression; it is no worse, no lower; **but no better.**"

### Police harassment

The first homosexual rights organization in the U.S. was apparently the Society for Individual Rights, chartered in Chicago in 1924. It published two issues of a newspaper, *Friendship and Freedom*.

The seven members of the Society planned to recruit other gays, and, through a process of education, change the sexual conduct laws.

But in less than a year, the wife of one member discovered the existence of the group and told a social worker, who called the police. Four members were arrested without warrant and jailed.

The organization disbanded, and ten years elapsed before another gay political organization appeared in the homophobic U.S. of A. ■

**The next installment of "Gay Resistance: The Hidden History" will complete the examination of American gay activism up to the birth of the "homophile" movement in the late 1940s.**

## The SWP and gays

# The boys on the bandwagon

**I**t's all been said before. Too many times. "The gay movement is peripheral to the class struggle. It's not even a movement, really, but a collection of people who sleep with their own sex. **Any** other movement is far more important, hence few resources should be allocated to gay rights."

One pseudo-radical proponent of this imperious brand of sexism and homophobia is the Socialist Workers Party. Two years ago they were busily painting banners reading "No More Miamis!" Now they are pulling out the few members they had assigned to the gay movement and sending them into "heavy industry" instead. Priorities, they claim.

### Straighten up!

Justification for this abandonment of the gay struggle appeared in the *Militant* on April 13, 1979.

A long article urged gays to push the labor movement toward support of gay rights, but cautioned gay activists (and the unions!) that "the unions should not throw the same resources into the defense of gay rights that they must throw into the defense of women's rights and Black or *latino* rights."

The *Militant* then called on the "so-called gay movement defined by sex" to repudiate the demand to revise age of consent laws—not because youthful sexuality should not be legislated, but because "the advocates of repealing age of consent laws are primarily adult men who believe they should be unrestricted in having sex with children."

Slanderous? Of course. But this isn't the first time the SWP regime has indulged in queer-baiting.

### Their line's been changed again

In early 1970, the SWP National Committee endorsed the unwritten policy of several branches to exclude gays from membership. The NC justified it as a matter of "security," a shabby echo of the armed services, the FBI, and the late, unlamented Senator Joe McCarthy.

A few months later, the Young Socialist Alliance, the SWP's youth affiliate, formally adopted and applied a policy of excluding gays from membership.

But later in the year, the policy was rescinded because the gay movement was growing, achieving recognition, and winning support. Because the SWP's reflex to any mass movement is to jump on the bandwagon, it was soon calling loudly for "Democratic Rights for Gays!"

But the party never admitted its past error; internally it was explained that the previous policy caused more problems than it solved.

The party then underwent a deepgoing internal debate that addressed the history of the gay movement, the source of gay oppression, transvestism, strategies for intervention, and related topics. But the proponents of significant intervention into the movement lost, even though they limited their proposal to the single-issue, legal reform tactic so beloved by the SWP.

Many gay activists left the party, and SWP intervention for the next several years was limited to urging the gay movement to avoid supporting or raising the demands of women, people of color, or workers, and to limit itself to legal reform.

### Back in the closet

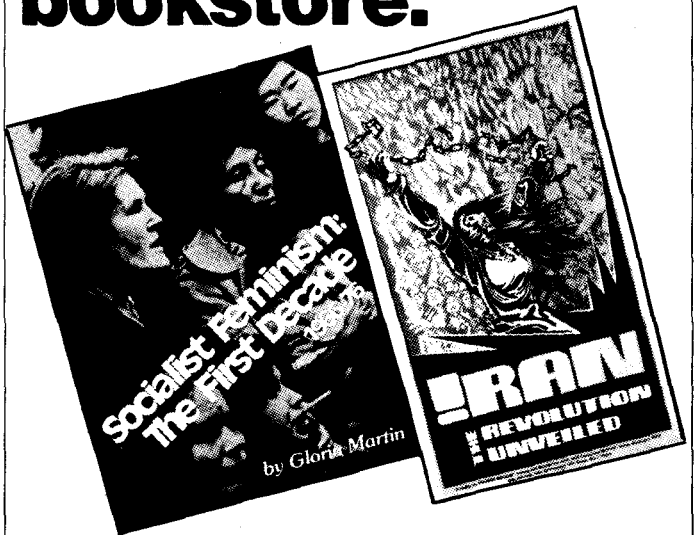
Today, as the conservative reaction mounts against the ERA, abortion rights, gay rights, and affirmative action, lesbians and gays of color are trying to roll back the right wing and are making their strong presence felt in the gay movement. And precisely at this juncture, the SWP capitulates to the sexist prejudices of the bigots and scurries into the trade unions to the absolute exclusion of other mass work!

Few will mourn SWP's passing from the gay struggle. The genuine militants and revolutionists in the gay milieu understand well that raising the consciousness of labor means pressuring it from **without** as well as from within, and this demands an **autonomous, independent movement to raise demands without fear or compromise.**

In practice, the SWP's fleeting, holier-than-thou patronage of gay politics only strengthened the liberal gay opportunists and tainted the word "radical." Now, with the SWP dilettantes gone, genuine radicalism stands to gain a far stronger voice in the gay movement, enabling the mass of lesbians and gay male activists to learn that opportunist reformism à la SWP can only spell defeat for gays **and** the unions.

Homophobic straight workers or antiunion gays can improve nothing for today; a revolutionary alliance of all the oppressed represents the only sensible road to liberation. ■

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## Is there marriage after rape?

# The convoluted Rideout story

by Jamie Bevson

**G**reta Rideout of Salem, Oregon is not unlike millions of other American wives who are repeatedly abused, beaten, and raped—by their husbands.

What is different about Greta's story is her widely publicized effort to fight back on the basis of a new Oregon law that outlaws rape in marriage.

Her suit was the first test of a similar law on the books in Iowa, Delaware, and New Jersey.

John Rideout, the accused, was technically on trial, but media sensationalism and courtroom theatrics turned the trial into an inquisition against Greta for daring to challenge the wife-as-property tradition.

She was "convicted" in the public mind as deserving of her husband's brutal treatment, and he was acquitted.

### Blaming the victim

The case began on October 10, 1978 when Greta charged John for having beaten her for refusing to have sex with him and then raping her in front of their 2-year-old daughter.

Greta's past sexual history was ruled admissible in court, and she was grilled about extramarital relations, a pre-marital abortion, having a child out of wedlock, and lesbian fantasies. The defense contended that Greta was a disturbed and impressionable girl manipulated by local feminists into "crying rape."

During the trial, John became a national symbol for the "keep 'em barefoot and pregnant" mentality, and Greta was offered \$50,000 for the rights to her story and a speaking tour.

Ten days after the acquittal, however, the Rideouts announced a "reconciliation." The financial offers to Greta were immediately withdrawn and the media insinuated that her charges had been motivated by financial greed. Liberals and feminists refused to clarify the facts behind the reconciliation and fled in confusion, dropping Greta like a hot potato.

### No shelter

Why did Greta go back?

What the reporters didn't divulge was that she was fired from her clerking job because of the notoriety, was evicted from her apartment because John's brother kicked her door down, received no financial support from John or from her family, was threatened with a custody battle for her child, and was branded with a public image as a pathetic liar.

Greta Rideout "chose" reconciliation because she had no alternatives.

But like so many abused women forced to return to their husbands, she learned that the cycle of abuse continued, despite his promises to change.

After two miserable months, Greta left again, quietly. But even a final divorce didn't prevent Rideout from coming back and kicking her door down in an act of terrorism on August 28. He pleaded guilty of trespassing and awaits sentencing.

### Rape law threatened

The trial and reconciliation, coupled with the desertion of Greta's erstwhile feminist supporters, opened the doors to a reactionary attack on the Oregon law. John's attorney hoped the trial "might discourage some ladies from



bringing this kind of charge," and some legislators decried it as "undermining the contractual obligations of marriage" and causing discrimination against men because *women* could not be charged with rape.

Several bills and an initiative against the law are underway in Oregon and the outcome could provide a rightwing springboard for similar action in other states with antirape laws.

### Sex and society

The marital rape law defines marriage as a partnership of equals rather than property ownership of women by men, and this is vital to the demand for women's right to control their own bodies.

The law also defines rape as a crime of violence, removing it from protection as a "private" sexual matter permissible in the marriage contract.

The law is a step forward, but it is not enough.

Women like Greta Rideout must not be abandoned when they do not succeed in attaining self-liberation. Most women are still socially, economically, and/or psychologically dependent on individual men and desperately need support and solidarity to aid them in their quest for emancipation.

Millions of Gretas are stymied by starvation wages, lack of job skills and few rights as workers, housewives, tenants, gays, or single parents.

The solution to their plight is to broaden the struggle against male violence into a political movement of all the oppressed that can transform capitalist family relationships and their economic underpinnings into a new way of life based on thoroughgoing principles of humanity and democracy.

# Abortion rights imperilled

by Lynda Schraufnagel

**F**eminists nationwide will rally during Abortion Rights Action Week on October 21-28 to launch a counter-offensive against a terroristic anti-abortion campaign that resorts to fire-bombing, break-ins, and assaults.

The anti-abortionists are the same familiar conglomerate of well-financed, rightwing Bible-beaters who hate gays, the ERA, labor unions, radicals, welfare mothers, and people of color. Many oppose contraception.

Since the 1973 Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion, Right-to-Life forces have used hysteria-producing computerized mailings to swell their ranks. 60,000 marched in Washington, D.C. last January 22, the anniversary of the Court decision.

Their most damaging victory to date is the 1977 Hyde Amendment which prevents use of federal money for abortions, thereby ending abortion rights for poor women in all but 8 states. And their latest campaign is for "fetus rights"—outlawing abortion through a constitutional amendment already ratified by 14 states.

Popular approval of abortion rights increased from 53% to 60% last year, but the minority makes the noise.

### Dining with the enemy

Awed by the power of anti-abortionists, NOW's president Eleanor Smeal invited the Right-to-Lifers to a "peace" meeting in February. She and other conciliators discussed reproductive rights with anti-abortion "feminists"—and never mentioned abortion. The meeting was disrupted by extremists displaying pickled fetuses.

Smeal's treachery in accommodating the anti-abortionists brought sharp criticism from the National

Women's Health Network and the formation of Reproductive Rights National Network (R2N2) in Chicago and the Abortion Rights Movement (ARM) in Washington, D.C.

This in turn spurred International Women's Day demonstrations in March centered on the abortion issue. The largest was organized in Olympia, Washington by a coalition representing gays, feminists, labor, radicals, and women of color.

R2N2 brought 1500 women to demonstrate against the National Right-to-Life Convention in Cincinnati on June 23, and on June 26 they delivered 22,000 signatures to Congress petitioning for no Medicaid restrictions on abortions. The answer of the House of Representatives was to forbid Medicaid abortions even in cases of rape, incest, or potential health damage.

### Rosie Jimenez, martyr

The Hyde Amendment in effect denies abortions only to impoverished women, many of them people of color. The only options left are sterilization or back-alley butchery.

An illegal abortionist killed Rosie Jimenez, 27, who was trying to rear a child and attend school on \$86 a month from welfare and a part-time job.

The response of the National Abortion Rights Action League (NARAL) is the creation of a Jimenez fund to replace Medicaid money for abortions, which graciously relieves Congress of the burden of supplying the needed 40 to 50 million dollars a year!

Jimenez' death demands an angry world outcry and the routing of the deadly Right-to-Lifers so that women may control their own bodies and their own minds. ■

Lynda Schraufnagel is a waitress, a unionist and an activist with Radical Women.

# Peltier recaptured

by Angelica Merlino

**N**ative American political prisoner Leonard Peltier is in jail again following an escape attempt that his supporters suspect was set up as a trap to kill him.

Peltier, framed on charges of murdering two FBI agents at Pine Ridge Reservation in 1975, fled the prison at Lompoc, California on July 22 and was captured five days later. Fellow escapee Bobby Garcia was also captured during the break, while a third escapee, Dallas Thundershield, was murdered by prison guards.

The federal government and local police are intensifying their joint annihilation of Native American freedom fighters. Peltier had been transferred from the Marion, Illinois penitentiary to Lompoc prison in a move which many Indian activists feel was another FBI conspiracy to isolate and kill him.

Only a few months ago, AIM leader John Trudell's wife and children were burned to death by arsonists in retaliation for his organizing a major demonstration to protest FBI harassment of Native Americans.

Thousands of national and international supporters have rallied to Peltier's defense, and his case has prompted Congressman Ron Dellums, D-Calif., and the Black Congressional Caucus to investigate illegal FBI activities against Indian militants. The



feds and the energy barons want Indian leaders silenced so the ravaging of reservation minerals can proceed unfettered.

Rocque Duenas, a coordinator of the Peltier Defense Committee and an aide to Dellums' FBI investigation, was arrested near Lompoc within hours of Peltier's escape, stripped, and charged with concealing escape maps in his clothing. The maps were undoubtedly a plant, and authorities may charge him with Thundershield's murder. Duenas is being held on \$250,000 bail.

The safety of Peltier, Duenas and other Indian leaders is in grave jeopardy, and Indian spokespeople are urging all friends of Native Americans to make their voices heard.

**For an international tribunal examination of U.S. abuse of Native Americans!**

**Hands off Native people's land! Stop the FBI genocide of Native American activists!**

**Drop all charges against Rocque Duenas! Free Leonard Peltier! ■**

**CRSP** Dedicated to the regroupment of U.S. Trotskyists, the Committee for a Revolutionary Socialist Party engages in free-wheeling discussion and meaningful action. For information, contact Murry Weiss, National Coordinator, P.O. Box 475, Village Stn., New York, NY 10014. (212) 789-4156.

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# PRISON

by Janet Sutherland

**S**ince that terrible day at Attica, New York when twenty-eight prisoners were massacred in 1971, prisons have changed only

for the worse.

The Washington State Penitentiary at Walla Walla is a prize case in point. It has been exploding for months, with no relief in sight for its beleaguered inmates.

In Walla Walla, inmates are race-baited, beaten, raped, condemned for weeks to live in a dirt yard in 114° temperature without shelter or shade, fed rotten TV dinners which must be eaten near pools of their own excrement, locked up four-to-a-cell for months, robbed of personal belongings, and routinely dehumanized.

Murders and suicides are endemic inside the walls, and choking fear haunts everyone.

U.S. prisons are hell-holes that reveal the naked core of a social system founded upon terrible punishments for the misfits, victims, rebels, parole violators and psychopaths who get sent there.

Prison life directly expresses the essence of class and race and sex relations in the outside society—and that is why prison condition exposés and revolts alarm the authorities. The revolts have the smell of revolution; if helpless convicts can erupt, anyone can.

## Desperate for a hearing

On May 9, three Walla Walla lifers—Robert Green, Carl Harp and Robert Washburn—held ten prison workers hostage for twelve hours in order to bargain for press coverage of prison conditions. Permitted to speak to reporters, the lifers condemned Walla Walla for being overcrowded, filthy, and lacking in facilities and programs. Then they surrendered, having harmed no one.

During the incident, the prison tactical squad herded 300 protesting prisoners into the recreation yard. The prisoners refused to return to their cells, and remained in the yard until the next day, shouting encouragement to the three lifers inside.

The reprisal against this was a five-day lockdown—total cell confinement for all prisoners.

## Selective prosecution

Trouble between Native Americans and Chicanos soon flared up, egged on by the divisive tactics of guards. Indian prisoner Lloyd Broncheau was murdered.

Walla Walla County Prosecutor Art Eggers refused to investigate or charge anyone for the murder on the basis of felon testimony—an implicit declaration of an open season on prisoners.

When Native American prisoners held a memorial service for Broncheau on June 15, guard William Cross forbade use of some scrap crate-wood to fire the sweatlodge used in Indian ceremonies. Later, as he intervened in a dispute, Cross was killed.

This time the prosecutor accepted the word of prisoners, and charged George and Jimmy Simmons, Native American brothers, with first degree murder.

The administration imposed another lockdown, and guards admonished Black prisoners to "get the featherheads... the lockdown is the Indians' fault."

## Sadism, Inc.

During lockdown, all mail was censored. No showers were permitted, little food was supplied, medical treatment was minimal, and prisoners were

beaten. One guard quit, appalled because other guards were lacing food with rat poison.

On July 7, men were dragged from their cells, robbed, and locked into mop closets. Returning Eight-wing prisoners saw their letters, photos, and other personal belongings dumped into garbage cans. This outrage, and the continued denial of showers, led them to tear up their cells in protest.

In response, drunken guards forced prisoners to run a gauntlet from their cells to the yard while guards beat them. Prisoners were then forced to lie spread-eagled and were clubbed in the groin. Guards on the wall urinated on the injured in the yard below.

230 men were forced to remain outside until late August, devoid of sanitation. Their rebelliousness provided the authorities with an excuse for confiscating more prisoner property and for reconstructing Eight-wing as a maximum security unit.

On July 8, twelve guards brutalized six segregated prisoners. One guard repeatedly sodomized inmate Carl Harp with a nightstick. Confirmation of this by the prison chaplain caused headlines and the suspension of twelve guards.

Members of the legislature, officials from the Department of Social and Health Services, and even Governor Ray, whose neglect and unconcern are notorious but who blamed her predecessor, all made political noises—and did nothing.

## Policy crisis

A team of outside, expert investigators blamed the guards for the uproar at Walla Walla, and the guards promptly staged a retaliatory wildcat strike on July 29 to protest unsafe working conditions.

The 42 guards who struck were summarily fired by Warden James Spalding, whose tacit consent to previous brutality evaporated when the media exposé became an embarrassment to him.

The guards' union, Local 621 of the Washington Federation of State Employees (an affiliate of AFSCME), requested sanction for the strike, but state union officials—aghast at guard viciousness—postponed action, offering only to negotiate safety conditions.

Debate in the press over responsi-

bility for the uproar was still raging as five of the twelve suspended guards were fired in mid-August. But none were prosecuted for assault, and seven returned to work despite prisoners' letters and a tape recording, released by United Families and Friends of Prisoners, that revealed guard savagery.

A public outcry has arisen for alleviation of prison overcrowding and guard violence, but the calls for reform are invidiously countered, most sensationally in an August *Life* magazine article that judged Walla Walla as **over-controlled by prisoners**.

The expert investigators' report excused the guards, but admitted that they relinquished control and then tried to regain it with excess force. The report attributed the guards' confusion to a conflict of management philosophies—prisoner passivity versus sharing in decisions—and recommended clarifying the role of the guards as enforcers of

lected an advisory council.

Former Warden B.J. Rhay agrees with the investigators and blames the liberalization policy of the previous administration for the upheaval. But there was ingrained resistance to these reforms from the outset, which undermined them and **set them up to fail**.

The investigators reported that guards sabotaged the new program, taking their cue from the warden's hostility to the changes.

A Native American prisoner told the *Freedom Socialist* that the administration permitted prisoners to arm themselves as a handy pretext for guard violence and reestablishing control.

Nationwide, reform measures are being stamped out in men's prisons. The blueprint of lockdown, search, destroy, and tighten-up employed at Walla Walla was conceived at Pontiac Correctional Center in Illinois last summer and repeated at Illinois' Stateville



**Walla Walla prison guards beat Manuel "Buddy" Rampola in the segregation unit. Observed via mirrors and drawn by prisoner Greg Takemoto on July 8, 1979.**

rules at the expense of prisoner rights.

## Chain-gang mentality

Ironically, Walla Walla has been considered a model of prison reform.

Prisoners wore their own clothes and hair styles, attended classes, participated in social, ethnic or issue clubs, and

prison in March.

Prison officials no longer even attempt rehabilitation or routine warehousing; they emulate the repressive Texas system, where 10% of all U.S. prisoners live under a fierce "law-and-order" regime, convict-guards act as thugs for the authorities, and strict regimentation and hard labor prevail.

## Macho microcosm

Prisons have a "tolerance" policy for inmates who injure each other.

Survival in a penitentiary is based on knowing how and whom to hurt. The weaker, younger, more sensitive and nonviolent prisoners suffer most, and gays and Indians are specially abused.

Placed in segregation for safety, gays forfeit the privileges of exercise, education, and work release. Unsegregated, they become the property of aggressive convicts or are marked for rape. And they are blamed when prisoners fight for the power to buy and sell them.

Guards also buy the male mystique. They usually come from small prison towns, which offer little alternative employment. Guards are frequently military veterans, schooled in totalitarian tactics. Says one Native American prisoner at Walla Walla, "**It's a big macho thing... the guards try to act tougher than the prisoners.**"

About 95% of all prison guards are white, and few understand the prison population, **which is 40%-80% people of color**. At Walla Walla, guards receive only two weeks of training; they respond to the unfamiliar, hostile prisoners with ignorance, fear and belligerence. And their racism introduces and reinforces divisions between warring ethnic/racial groups.

## FSP organizer talks with Indian inmates

**O**n the 54th day of the lockdown, I accompanied anxious representatives from the Northwest Indian Women's Council and the Native American press in a 12-hour meeting with terrified Indian prisoners in a dilapidated visiting room at Walla Walla penitentiary.

One by one, thirteen prisoners were brought in to talk to us. And in low, tense voices the men drew a graphic picture of their torment.

A prison administration that treats their religious rights and ceremonies with contempt and hostility... racist guards who take sadistic pleasure in taunting them with insults like "Where is your god now, featherhead?" as they beat and maul them... a sinister prison hospital that maims or kills more than it heals... the loneliness and despair of long sentences served hundreds of miles from families and tribes.

The excruciating strain of isolation, confinement and the constant threat of death (at the hands of guards or other prisoners) was etched deeply on their faces. One man talked openly of

suicide. The rest spoke with the emotionally charged monotone of the condemned.

At intervals they could find no words to describe their nightmare, so we sat in silence, not wanting to end the meeting which would force them to go back to their cells.

They handed us messages from their cellmates. Hastily scribbled on scraps of paper, those desperate pleas for help filter through my mind to this day.

And yet, despite the fear and the horror, all the prisoners were more concerned for others than themselves. "Get the weakest and the most vulnerable transferred first," they urged us, over and over again.

Driving away from Walla Walla late that night, the memory of Attica suffused all of us, and we felt a sudden, urgent responsibility for preventing another massacre.

We had witnessed the anguish of human beings whose lives were in imminent jeopardy. We had to let the world know, before it was too late, before the final darkness.

— Guerry Hoddersen

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## The new face of the feminine mystique

The word is out, ladies: feminism is passé and the hooker look is in.

According to Madison Avenue, feminism is only the shrill, strident echo of a distant past before women liberated themselves from the home and assumed glamorous careers in corporate suites and government bureaus. The "new woman" has no need of a movement to defend her rights—she already has them!

Yes, today's woman should be a devoted mother, glamorous wife, highpowered careerist, charming hostess and expert homemaker, international gourmet, long-distance jogger, athlete and exerciser, seductress, community activist, cultural sophisticate, and purveyor of the "meaningful" relationship. That's all?

Never mind that we're still doing most of the household chores, that those challenging new careers look suspiciously like the same dead-end, underpaid jobs we've always had, that childcare is a luxury item and that inflation is pricing working women out of house and home, health care, autos—and those expensive new-look cosmetics.

All we have to do is learn to turn adversity to our own advantage, think positively, behave assertively (not *aggressively!*), and get out there and make it—*fashionably attired.*

### Retrograde culture

*Retro* (for retrogressive) is the key "in" word for women's apparel.

Commercial nostalgia for the fatal '50s has produced stiletto heels, super-tight peg-legged pants, and slick merchandising of come-hither dresses.

Women's magazines advise us on the finer points of hunting, titillating and capturing men.

And childless writers harangue us on the joys of motherhood and monogamous commitment.

Woman-as-victim is the latest in chic.

Dark, suave, compelling Draculas do a brisk business vampirizing and slaughtering entranced women on the stage and silver screen.

Record jackets display semi-clad women in the delectable process of being raped, beaten, chained and stabbed.

And *Vogue* shows what fun it is to be slapped around while clad in haute couture costumes.

### Schizophrenia time

What a split-level image! Females are to be self-confident, independent and sophisticated, AND dependent and submissive playthings. But there's a method to this madness.

Betty Friedan observed in *The Feminine Mystique* that the empty glorification of woman as a society's reluctance to treat her as a complete human being. And in a time of deepening recession and joblessness, the corporate powers are pushing women out of the job market and back into the home—which requires the crushing or co-opting of the women's movement and its gains.

This superwoman image is regarded as a sop to middleclass feminism while it beats a hasty retreat from women's basic demands and concentrates on the needs of white professional women and relatively affluent housewives.

But this contradictory image of womanhood, virtually unattainable even for the privileged, puts a cruel and impossible burden upon working and poor women, women of color, and lesbians. It reduces women to self-hate, a sense of inadequacy, and competitiveness—the hallmarks of the feminine mystique.

Madison Avenue is huckstering an artificial, irrational, essentially Nazi program for women—*Kinder, Kirche, Küche*. Capitalism tries to hype women by glorifying the traditional role of mother, wife and lover, but failing this, the violent woman-as-victim image is employed to convince us that female autonomy cannot prevail against the macho supermale.

### For a new sexual politics

If the powers that be think they can bamboozle women once again with a shoddy, '50s-style hype they have another think coming. Women have nothing to gain by resurrecting all the badges of oppression. Instead, we must topple the system that thrives on turning us into corpses, dollies or property. And that means *seizing* the government and the corporate suites and creating some *really* avant-garde styles in human existence.

— Guerry Hoddersen

# The revolution unveiled

One of the great travesties against the international movement for the emancipation of women has been the systematic repression of its history and the lessons of its struggles.

All feminists, radicals and historians, therefore, should hail Gregory Massell's fascinating work, *Surrogate Proletariat: Moslem Women and Revolutionary Strategies in Soviet Central Asia, 1919-1929*.

The book documents the heretofore unheralded revolution by Moslem women in the Central Asian republics of the Soviet Union who, under the leadership of Bolshevik women cadre, broke the chains of their bondage to the polygamous Islamic patriarchy.

This book restores a key missing link in the intertwined story of the struggle for workers' and women's liberation—and it illuminates the centrality of women's struggle in the current Iranian revolution.

But there is a basic flaw in the author's politics and methodology. He wishes to demonstrate how "totalitarian" Bolshevism consolidated its power in Central Asia by "manipulating" women to "cruelly" disrupt Islamic traditionalism. So he twists the wealth of historical data he has unearthed to fit his pet notions and to reflect his adherence to the behaviorist school of bourgeois sociology, which views all human activity as programmed and passive behavioral patterns detached from historical leaps and economic reality.

To reap the real fruits of his research, therefore, the very different standpoint of historical materialism must be employed.

No stronger confirmation exists in modern history for Engels' postulate that "the first class oppression coincides with that of the female sex by the male" than the class dynamics in the steppes of Central Asia at the time of the October Revolution in 1917.

By common law, women were the chattel slaves of the men of that society.

Women's labor in the fields and on household looms produced the bulk of the economic product in Central Asia, but this was appropriated in its entirety by fathers or husbands. Through the mechanism of the bride price, women were sold as commodities in the market place. And the bride price fluctuated in direct relation to the market price for the products of women's labor.

Women had no rights over their own bodies and no rights to personal property. They were slaughtered or beaten at will by fathers or husbands. Through the custom of levirate, a widow was forced to marry and serve the closest surviving male relation of her husband, and runaway daughters and wives were hunted down and mutilated like slaves in the U.S. South.

As the ultimate symbol of their bondage, women of the settled agricultural societies were forced from the age of eight to don heavy cotton clothing and black horsehair veils which covered them from head to toe, blocking them forever from the sunlight.

Concomitant with female bondage was a system of sexual apartheid still prevalent in Islamic society today—and recently decreed again for Iran by the Ayatollah Khomeini. Women were secluded in one part of the household and never permitted to join the company of men or address men who were not close relations. A woman could only travel under escort, slinking along the sides of a street.

Incredibly, Massell ponders why Central Asian men so wantonly abused and destroyed their very valuable human property. His bourgeois, sexist mentality cannot comprehend the direct connection between brutality toward women and men's abiding fear of a slave revolt.

Prior to 1917, the female revolt could only be dis-

parate and unorganized, usually taking the form of murder of the male slaveowner-tyrant.

And despite the repression, women manifested solidarity, helping each other as they could.

When Red Army troops entered the Asian steppes, they found their first and surest allies among the women, in particular the runaway wives and daughters, orphans, child brides and cast-off wives. These women were swiftly recruited into the Bolshevik party and became its *most committed, core cadre*.

And the victorious proletariat of Russia took up the cause of their enslaved sisters.

Through the *Zhenotdel* (Department for Work among Women of the Communist Party Central Committee), hundreds of Bolshevik women throughout Russia went into the steppes to work with the Central Asian women cadre for the overthrow of female slavery and the establishment of socialism.

Under the inspired leadership of revolutionary feminists like Inessa Armand, Krupskaya, and Nukhrat, the *Zhenotdel* developed a two-pronged strategy for the abolition of slavery.

First, they dealt with women's immediate survival needs. They created economic and social alternatives for women trapped in the male-dominated clan structure. Women's clubs were organized which initiated all-women production units on land that had been expropriated from local potentates. These clubs also provided health and medical education, skills training, day care centers, and dormitories, all of which facilitated the integration of women into the industrial proletariat.

Schools for political education were set up so that Central Asian women could find their voice, exert their will and take on a leading role in constructing the new society. A key feature of this process was the creation of *women's soviets*, known as the Delegate Assemblies of Women.

Next, and carefully coordinated with the first part of the strategy, the new workers state banned bride-selling, polygamy, child marriage, and the levirate. All acts of brutality against women were prosecuted and the equal rights of women to property, employment, and political expression were asserted and defended. Women were encouraged to divorce vicious and polygamous husbands, and this campaign enjoyed a huge response.

All these measures were backed up by the full power of the Soviet state.

By 1927, the assault on slavery reached its height. *Tens of thousands of women participated in mass unveilings in the public squares of the cities of Central Asia.*

The ten-year struggle of the *Zhenotdel* and the women of Central Asia broke the back of female bondage—and in the process won over to the revolution the poor and landless male peasants and nomads.

Tragically, however, the goals of the revolutionary feminists to smash all manifestations of the oppression of women were not to be completed.

There were no bounds to the fury of the Islamic-patriarchs over the new liberation of women. But the bitterest blow to women and to the revolution was the treachery of Central Asian male Communist Party leaders. Fearful of losing their own male prerogatives, these "communists" insidiously sabotaged the campaign against women's slavery.

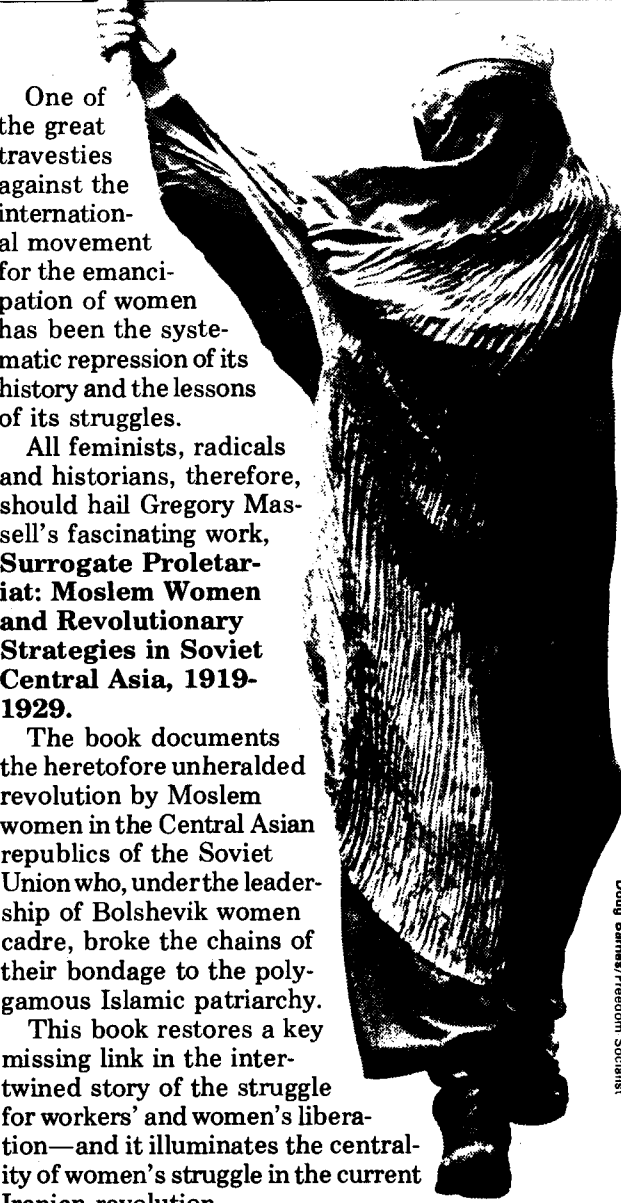
The Stalinist Thermidor—the backlash to revolutionary integrity and Bolshevism—resulted in the bureaucratic degeneration of the Russian Revolution as a whole and in the dissolution of the *Zhenotdel* and all other party and mass organs of struggle for women's emancipation. Thousands of the most courageous Central Asian and Russian women cadre were lynched and by 1929 the women's movement was stamped out.

The swiftness, strength, and thoroughness of the Central Asian women's revolt and rise to leadership were directly related to their acutely oppressed status, and the legacy of their heroism lives on today in the growing revolutionary alliance of the Iranian communist and women's movements.

The tremendous historical experience of this female proletariat foreshadows and reveals the path that the international revolutionary movement must follow to achieve socialist victory and freedom for all oppressed humanity. Women are not only the locomotive of revolutionary history but the sex whose status is the fundamental index of a society's progress or retreat.

— Stephan Kass

Gregory Massell. *Surrogate Proletariat: Moslem Women and Revolutionary Strategies in Soviet Central Asia, 1919-1929*. Princeton University Press, 1974. 435 p. \$20.00



Doug Sarnes/freedom Socialist

# MANHATTAN

Woody Allen's latest comedy-drama, *Manhattan*, opens with a spectacular black and white study of the New York skyline and harbor, replete with fireworks and a soundtrack of George Gershwin classics. And after this loving tribute out of Allen's fantasies, another less innocuous fantasy unravels.

Though he brings to *Manhattan* his usual skill at condensing humor into witty statements, building tension, and exposing the subtle self-deception of human relationships, his humor hopscotches back and forth, crossing the line between irony and the cheap shot. Allen edges from wit into stereotype, drawing easy laughs from a comfortable audience. He balances, teeters, and inevitably loses control of his sharp, honed one-liners. Then, falling into cliché, he steps on the crack that breaks your mother's (not your father's) back.

Allen works with familiar material: the convoluted, endlessly analyzed particulars of the relationships between the people who live in *his* city. Everyone is settled comfortably in careers, dinners, affairs, and cars. When Isaac, the main character, quits his TV writer's job, he still retains his analyst without much hardship.

Fans of the film insist that Allen is poking fun at his characters' sexism and pretentiousness, that he is satirizing the privileged. But the self-deprecating humor is very mild, and too little change occurs.

The effect of humor depends on who's laughing and at whose expense. The ones who really lose out in this film are those who end up most stereotyped—the women, particularly the lesbians. I saw the film in a theatre in San Francisco's wealthy Union Street district, and the bulk of the laughter came from men. The laughs filled the theatre most solidly when women characters in the movie belittled themselves, or when the subject arose of Isaac's ex-wife, a lesbian.

The audience roared at lines such as "My wife left me for another woman," "Very few people survive even one mother," "I thought your penis

substitute would be a Great Dane," "Your vibes were so great you changed her from a bisexual into a homosexual," and "A book about my mother, the castrating Zionist."

One of the movie's most disturbing scenes is between Isaac and Jill, his ex-wife, and her female lover. The two lesbians are predictably portrayed as bitchy, cold, and hostile. Jill is exploiting the details of her failed marriage to Isaac by writing a soon-to-be-published book. She also sends their son to ballet lessons, which Isaac, typically homophobic, construes to mean she is trying to make his son into a "queer." So he plays football with the boy.

The film manages to end on a relatively strong note provided by Tracy, the young woman with whom Isaac is involved. Calmly resisting his desperate, cynical credo of "no-one is honest when he wants something," Tracy holds her own and emerges with integrity, self-respect and hope for people. But Tracy, too, lives in affluence and ease, and represents nobody but herself.

Warmed-over Woody Allen just doesn't work. The moment an artist rests or repeats or relies on what worked before, the product suffers. *Manhattan* doesn't move much beyond *Annie Hall* and the same loveable, bumbling, searching, sexist male loser, bless his little heart.

I wonder if Woody Allen will move beyond his almost complacent portrayals of a sensitive chauvinist to a changing, struggling, *feminist man* using his talents to do more than endlessly work through the details of his 20-year-long psychoanalysis. I hope that his fascination with women will reorient him from his flip, existential theatre of the absurd and the futile, and lead him to the rich humor and drama of people who struggle to change the world as well as themselves.

— Karen Brodine

Karen Brodine is a poet, typesetter, teacher and socialist feminist organizer.



Clara Fraser

## Of hermits, hedonists and related narcissists

In the melting pot ghetto of East Los Angeles where I grew up during the Great Depression, everybody seemed to know that the only way to keep things from getting worse was to organize to make them better. Everyone was involved in some group bent on improving some facet of social arrangements. What outfit you belonged to was your badge of distinction, the mark of your individuality and the guidepost to your relations with others. And the kind of life that gravitated around causes was full of meaning and stimulation. Social activists found satisfaction, ideological understanding, humor, and companionship as the fringe benefits of commitment, and it was an exciting way to rise to the call of *human* beingness. The political *was* the personal.

That's right, back in those olden times working people cared about the world, and everybody had a pet panacea, especially in that golden southern California clime of sects and movements where anything seemed possible and the improbable was institutionalized. And to the adolescents growing up optimistic, athletic, and reflexively welded to our clubs and teams and schools and neighborhoods, the symbol of high craziness was the *hermit*, the barefoot wierdo who wandered through the Hollywood hills and fled if people approached. We laughed 'til we fell down, teenage-style, at a man who chose solitude instead of the human comedy.

Our heroes, naturally, were the freedom fighters and rebels. One day in 1938, a group of wounded Spanish Civil War veterans visited our high school, and classrooms emptied as students and teachers alike rushed to welcome the Abraham Lincoln Brigaders and to gaze, star-struck, at the glamorous figures. One of them, praise be, lived on my street and offered to walk me home. He walked and I floated, Cinderella at the ball. *That* was prestige!

We were poor, with nothing but prospects, but filled with hope and idealism and the enormous capacity for enjoyment. We never had any *money*; everything we earned went for clothing, school supplies, streetcar fare, movies and dance halls—the basics. Daddies were periodically unemployed and mamas slaved in the garment shops or in somebody's kitchen or store, and we hung on every tale of our parents matching wits and fists with the bosses. We helped neighbors in need, fed the beggars who came to the door if they asked *nicely*, and went to all the mass meetings against the mass of injustices. We had a wonderful time applauding the speakers, booing the bad guys, and kidding around with the buddies we ran into. We were a *community*, and that was invigorating.

How good it was to be young and alive and turned on and tuned in and doing something that mattered.

Quiet as it's kept, it still is. While nothing is too good for the working class, and no labor-saving household device should ever be sneered at, when the sole purpose of living is to luxuriate in the "good life," in "personal life," in the panoply of "self-discovery" lures and hoaxes—irrespective of what's happening in the world and to whom—then it is clear that many people are simply losing their *homo sapien* bearings. So I welcome the current dissection of this phenomenon of narcissism because it focuses the spotlight on the follies of the resigned, the fashionably cynical, the boringly self-absorbed, and the yearners for private contentment amid public chaos.

As if individual satisfaction can be achieved by political withdrawal in a society sick unto death and crying out for more, not less, collective responsibility and intervention!

The me generation is the inexorable outcome of the official, anti-humanitarian, anti-worker, racist, sexist, bourgeois culture. Some of these shallow eat, drink and be merryites, frantic to get it on before the sky falls down, can get real nasty, and radicals are being mau-mau'd by these me-me's. But others are unaware of the option of creating stunning progress, unexposed to the exhilarating benefits of collective politics. Still others passively await a new giant movement to supply safety and comfort in numbers.

In any event, the tables will turn, and the new crop of self-pamperers will become as extinct as their predecessors, the hermits. For a new upsurge, a new uplift, is in the air, and the cultural cycle will soon reflect the upbeat connectedness of the '30s and the '60s instead of the disengagement of the '50s.

The culture always reflects the socio-economic times. But this doesn't excuse a surrender to alien class pressures, and we must let consciousness be our pilot in dealing with the privatists. Time is on our side—for they will soon discover that they're not really having any *fun*.

## Art & Politics

WHEN WE succeed in adjusting our social structure in such a way as to enable us to solve social questions as fast as they become really pressing, they will no longer force their way into the theatre. Had Ibsen, for instance, had any reason to believe that the abuses to which he called attention in his prose plays would have been adequately attended to without his interference, he would no doubt have gladly left them alone. The same exigency drove William Morris in England from his tapestries, his epics, and his masterpieces of printing, to try and bring his fellow citizens to their senses by the summary process of shouting at them in the streets and in Trafalgar Square. John Ruskin's writing began with *Modern Painters*; Carlyle began with literary studies of German culture and the like; both were driven to become revolutionary pamphleteers. If people are rotting and starving in all directions, and nobody else has the heart or brains to make a disturbance about it, the great writers must.

— George Bernard Shaw, *English playwright*

I KNOW not if I deserve that a laurel-wreath should one day be laid on my coffin. Poetry, dearly as I have loved it, has always been to me but a divine plaything. I have never attached any great value to poetical fame; and I trouble myself very little whether people praise my verses or blame them. But lay on my coffin a *sword*; for I was a brave soldier in the Liberation War of humanity.

— Heinrich Heine, *German poet*

## The organization question



I'M GOING TO GIVE UP TRYING TO GET AHEAD IN MY WORK, SO I CAN CONCENTRATE ON SLOWING DOWN THE RATE AT WHICH I'M FALLING BEHIND.

## What is the FSP?

The Freedom Socialist Party is a revolutionary, socialist feminist organization, dedicated to the replacement of capitalist rule by a genuine workers democracy that will guarantee full economic, social, political and legal equality to women, people of color, gays, and all who are exploited, oppressed and repelled by the ruthless profit system and its offshoot—imperialism.

### For revolutionary internationalism

The working class is international, bound by global abuse and the common task of winning liberation through socialism. We support the revolution on all its fronts and seek to transform it into worldwide socialism, which alone can insure the final defeat of capitalism and all forms of subjugation.

### For union democracy

The working class has the strategic power, numbers, need and opportunity to effect a socialist transformation of society. But first the trade unions must be freed from the stranglehold of the class-collaborationist bureaucrats and from dependence on the twin political parties of big business. Internal union democracy, class struggle principles, independent political action in the form of a Labor Party, and an end to internal racism, sexism and heterosexism are on the order of the day.

### For women's liberation

We organize for the total emancipation of women on every level of life. The multiple afflictions of women—as members of an oppressed sex, workers, people of color, lesbians—propel them into militancy within every social movement, thereby laying the basis for unifying all the mass movements. Women, particularly workingclass women of color, are playing an increasingly vanguard role in the American and world revolution, thanks to the rise of the autonomous women's movement and women's caucuses within unions and all political parties.

### For racial/ethnic freedom

The struggles of oppressed minorities against racism objectively challenge the basic core of the American political system. The resistance of people of color, who suffer a dual oppression, spurs all other sectors of the working class to advanced political consciousness and militancy.

We stand for immediate and unconditional economic, political, and social equality for Blacks, Chicanos, Asian Americans, Native Americans and Puerto Ricans, and endorse the demand for self-determination by the Indian and Puerto Rican nations.

We advocate the collaboration of Black organizations with the revolutionary movement as the most realistic and historically validated alternative to the dead ends of separatism or reformist integration. The revolution depends upon massive Black involvement and leadership.

### For gay equality

The revolt of lesbians and gay men against sexual repression and sex-role stereotyping is a key ingredient of the fight for women's equality and is equally revolutionary. Revolutionary socialism is the logical road for sexual minorities who stand apart from the bourgeois nuclear family and who wish to end, once and for all, the long, bloody centuries of persecution and terror.

Because of their special oppression, lesbians are a particularly militant component of all social movements.

### For human rights

Among the most hapless and vulnerable victims of capitalism are children, elders, the disabled, prisoners—anyone who is not a profitable worker. We demand a world where all people have the inalienable right to security, care, love, and unhampered opportunity and growth.

### For a mass party of the working class

History has proven that only a thoroughly democratic and centralized vanguard party can lead the proletariat and its many allies to power. The FSP, a product of the living tradition of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky, aspires to become a mass organization capable of providing direction and coordination for the coming American revolution.

Through independent growth, revolutionary regroupment, and other forms of fusion, we are confident of our eventual merger with the dynamic masses who will sweep every obstacle out of their path and ascend to the socialist future.

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State Director of Adult Corrections Robert Tropp blames the inadequate training of guards on lack of funds, but he was forced to admit that he got from the legislature all the training funds that he requested.

Such deliberate neglect pervades the administration, which views prisoners as scum of the earth who respect only brutishness. Hence, guards need be nothing more than instruments of repression—and convenient scapegoats when news of the blood and corpses hits the front pages.

### Prison is for the poor

The prison population is increasing astronomically (from 194,896 in 1967 to 278,141 in 1977) as rightwing political pressures result in more and stiffer sentences and stricter parole rules. And criminal techniques learned in prison result in an ever higher rate of return—**up to 75%**!

The previous income of felons was 45% lower than the national median, and their crimes are mostly nonviolent—against **property**, not people.

Income, social background, and race determine who will be imprisoned; middleclass white offenders can buy a different grade of justice.

The biggest thieves and murderers, of course, head corporations, the government, and the military. When deposed, they reside in seaside villas on rich pensions, or write bestsellers. Few are tried for their crimes.

### Slave labor

Many states use prisoners to build roads and clean parks, paying them little or nothing.

A recent lawsuit against the Texas Department of Corrections revealed that slave labor conditions can virtually make prisons self-supporting. Convict products and labor pay for three-fourths of the cost of Texas prisons, and furnish goods and produce for other institutions as well.

Prison jobs offer little but relief from idleness. Making license plates involves skills that are useless on the outside. Prison laborers receive no fringe benefits or compensation for injury on the job. And a sizeable portion of their meager wages is often siphoned into an inmate welfare fund—actually a petty cash account for the administrators.

In work release programs, prisoners who work outside as dishwashers and janitors pay inflated rates for inadequate room and board.

Prisoners are also exploited as guinea pigs by drug companies doing medical research. Dangerous drugs are tested on inmates, who are exposed to diseases like malaria and hepatitis to test new cures. By offering incentives such as an outside trip, daily visiting privileges, or better pay than prison jobs provide, the drug companies lure willing victims who rarely know the risks involved.

### Capitalism, the prison outside

Prisons are not contrived to be humane places.

Despotism and cruelty are the normal mode. A dictatorial hierarchy, racism against and among people of color, rigidly drawn class lines, sexism to the point of mania, and machismo-worship are the prevailing strands of prison culture—a telling caricature of life outside the walls.

Prison simply isolates and intensifies the bourgeois, white male supremacist model of power relations.

Prison is the degrading end-product of an outside system of neglect which fails to provide decent childcare, housing, health care, schooling, social consciousness, employment or cultural enrichment to millions of people. Capitalism then channels much of the rebellion of the poor and deprived back on their own people, in the form of crime, and jails the criminal—double jeopardy for oppression.

The thief who burglarizes the corner gas station must not be allowed to turn his energy into making the assets of Standard Oil available to all the people. He must not be allowed to become a political challenger, an organizer of masses. He must remain isolated, preferably antisocial, dangerous. And he must learn to **accept** the system of capitalism, crime, punishment and jails so he can become a model prisoner and perpetuate the cesspool inside and outside the walls.

So the chain of abuse on the outside reverberates doubly inside prisons, the dumping grounds of a society which cares about profit, not people.

Meanwhile, workers bear the burden of increased taxes for prisons, and also pay for crime when they become the victims of criminals, i.e., the **successful** graduates of the prisons.

### What can be done

In a sane, caring, socialist world, crime will plummet as equal distribution of wealth, vast opportunity for useful work, and a real share in decision-making give all people access to a full and rewarding life.

But today millions resort to crime to survive, to feel important, to escape drudgery, or because they are bred to it. And truly dangerous criminals should not be glamorized or sentimentalized, for the lumpen, declassed, largely slum-bred sociopaths feed off workers and are the raw material for strikebreaking and fascist gangs.

**But most people in prison shouldn't be there at all**, especially political prisoners, and in the interim, radical reform of prisons is crucial, a matter of life and death to prisoners and their families, the working guards, the proletariat as a whole, and the helpless victims of crime. The entire criminal justice system must be revamped, modernized, revolutionized.

"Crimes" that do not victimize others—sexual practices, morality and "age of consent" infractions, gambling, prostitution, narcotics and alcohol consumption, drunkenness, pornography, self-defense, petty welfare and tax violations, etc.—must be expunged from the lawbooks.

Similarly, all anti-labor, anti-picketing and anti-assembly laws and injunctions, and criminal syndicalist laws, must be ruled unconstitutional, as well as laws penalizing the media.

Radicals, labor unions, political and service organizations, feminists, gays, people of color and concerned individuals need to form a massive coalition to press for all the indicated demands:

- **Sentencing and parole policies must be geared to realism and fairness**, and those who enforce them permitted reasonable case loads.
- **Smaller prisons and an alternative to solitary cells** must be built or adapted immediately.
- **For varying types of custody from minimum to high security**. Separate the insane and the incorrigibles from the rational and those whose crimes are victimless or against property.
- **Community control of prisons—let unionists, civil rights groups, and families of prisoners, not professional bureaucrats, determine policy.**
- **Prisoner self-government** to allow prisoners a real voice in policy.
- **A Citizens' Review Board** to hear all complaints, assess violations, award damages and impose fines.
- **Prisoner rights** to organize political, labor, religious, cultural and social units; to have access to the media; to be supplied decent housing, food, health and psychiatric care; to compensation for lost property and violations of civil and human rights.
- **End all brutality, racism and sexual oppression in prisons**. Fire staff who violate prisoner rights.
- **Parole Native American prisoners to their own or accepting tribes or place them in nonracist custody near their homes.**
- **Good salaries and conditions and regular training in human relations and supervision for prison staff.**
- **Proportional representation of women, people of color and gays** at all levels of prison staff.
- **Let friends and families of prisoners visit frequently and in privacy.**
- **Effective skills training programs for prisoners**. Apprenticeships and jobs at prevailing wages, with membership in related unions. Useful work release programs. Prison should be a productive community where inmates pay their expenses, make restitution for crimes, and support their families.

Humanity cannot survive half-imprisoned and half-free. All the world's a jail under capitalism, but nobody is more impotent, harassed, or despairing than the captives behind bars. The condition of people in prison is the proper concern of the working class, for prison is only the distorted mirror image of the total society. ■

**where to find the FSP**

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#### CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles: P.O. Box 29471, Los Angeles, CA 90027. (213) 463-3706.  
San Francisco/Berkeley: 2661 21st St., San Francisco, CA 94110. (415) 824-1497.

#### NEW YORK

New York City: c/o Williams, 82 Prospect Pl. S.W., #2, New York, NY 11215. (212) 778-6768.

#### OREGON

Portland: 506 N.E. Alberta, Portland, OR 97211. (503) 249-8067.

#### WASHINGTON

Seattle:  
National Office, Freeway Hall, 3815 5th Ave. N.E., Seattle, WA 98105. (206) 632-7449.  
North Branch, 1931 E. Calhoun, Seattle, WA 98112. (206) 722-3812.  
South Branch, 831 32nd Ave., Seattle, WA 98122. (206) 324-5016.

# A Victory for Socialist Feminism

## Organizer's Report to the 1969 FSP Conference



Bill Cumming/Detail from portrait

**A Victory for Socialist Feminism** describes the birth-pangs of a political party. When, in 1967, the Seattle Branch of the Socialist Workers Party separated from the parent body and became the Freedom Socialist Party, one of the unresolvable differences that had precipitated the split was the Woman Question. And in the new party's first two years of life, its feminist principles were tested even further in the crucible of experience and all but the most determined champions of women's equality ended up out of the party.

Those comrades who stuck to their feminist battle stations emerged tempered enough to go on to build a unique kind of party.

The issue that triggered the split in the young FSP was a divorce between two leading members, Clara and Richard Fraser (Clara Kaye and Richard Kirk). Washington State divorce law at that time put the wife at a terrible disadvantage, and when Richard Fraser forced the issue and contested Clara's divorce and custody suit, the party had to face the then-disputed question of whether a political principle or a private matter was at stake. Fortunately for its sur-

vival, the party made the correct decision—an historic decision.

Clara Fraser, considerably ahead of her time, refused to be intimidated by male chauvinist "radicals" who scornfully accused her of confusing the personal and the political. Nor would she be shamed into secrecy and submission by any individualistic fear of public "disgrace" over the exposure of her domestic battles for equal rights. She saw clearly that the physical abuse, the husband's alcoholism, her economic burdens, and the reactionary political and moral slander against her character, wielded as blackmail in the child custody dispute, were not just the center of *her* case, but the heart of women's oppression everywhere. And these outrages were no more to be tolerated in a radical party than anywhere else; on the contrary, in a Marxist organization energetically espousing the great principles of women's emancipation, Richard Fraser's conduct was particularly reprehensible.

The ensuing intra-party conflict categorically separated the socialist feminists from the hypocrites, and the **Victory** transpired when the conflict deepened into rift and the rift into outright split. Because the women and their few male defenders won out, this chapter of feminist history warrants close attention today, when the women's movement is scrutinizing the Left in search of a basis for a principled alliance.

And the book speaks just as tellingly to male-dominated radical groups who are still wondering just what it *is* that women revolutionaries want!

### V. The Nature of the Split

**T**

he split in the FSP did not happen cleanly and neatly.

There was no clear counterposition of opposing views, no intensive internal discussion bringing out the political character

of the disputes, no final confrontation and decision at the party convention.

Had all this taken place, the nature of the split would have been crystal clear. Since it didn't happen, the split had to be subjected to an ex post facto analysis.

The immediate occasion of the split was an organizational dispute over an expulsion. In one sense, then, the split can be seen as the culmination of a long series of clashes over organizational norms, priorities and procedures. If our analysis went no further than this, we would have to say that the split in the FSP derived from organizational differences, with the majority asserting organizational standards that the minority was simply unable to live up to.

Finding the party's internal discipline unbearably constricting, they walked out and established a club of their own in which they could operate more comfortably.

This is part of the truth, but it does not go far enough.

It is an axiom of Leninism that any serious, long-term organizational conflict, especially one culminating in a split along factional lines, generally expresses a deep, underlying political polarization. It is the task of analysis to identify and reveal this basis.

#### The Character of the Opposition

The oppositionists in the FSP, even at the point of split, never admitted the factional nature of their grouping, because they were unable to explain the political basis of their factional cohesion. They had never thought through the implications of their politics. They remained to the end an unprincipled combination, unable to find any basis for their bloc other than a reflexive hostility to the standards, methods and personnel of the party majority.

What lay behind this hostility?

Obviously, most (but not all) of the oppositionists felt an instinctive repugnance to the practice of bolshevik organization. *This in itself reflects a certain political attitude.*

At the basis of Leninist organizational norms lies the concept of the vanguard party, standing in an advanced position, ahead of the mass movement, constantly striving to bring the movement up to its level while maintaining its own principles and program intact.

*An attack on organizational norms and procedures, therefore, is generally an implicit attack on the concept of the vanguard party and a drawing away from the clear and sharp definition of program that characterizes such a party.*

It is important to realize that an assault on the

party's program need not take the form of an open, direct ideological assault. It can express itself through an attempt to interpret the program in an opportunistic fashion by softening its distinctive features to make it more palatable to more backward elements, and even to opponent tendencies within the movement.

Party members who display such opportunistic leanings will also manifest dissatisfaction with the "undiplomatic" behavior of comrades who are too "pushy," too "inflexible," too "intolerant,"—who insist on a precise and uncompromising political differentiation of the party from its opponents and also from the lower political levels of the mass movements in which the party intervenes.

The oppositionists in the FSP instinctively shied away from any attempt of the majority to push the party's **program** as its determining feature, and to insist on **principle** as the guideline to tactics in the mass movement.

Seen in this light, the major clashes that preceded the split reveal a definite pattern.

The February priorities crisis involved something more than a publication schedule. The real priority involved was the priority of the **party program** as defined in the basic documents containing our distinctive positions on the Black Question and the Woman Question.

This program should have been the key to determining the party's public image and its course of intervention in the mass movement.

The minority's sudden preoccupation with China, their tortuous attempt to make it a central point of dispute with the majority, and their urging the party to enter the regroupment arena before clearly and publicly presenting its *own* program, were aspects of their general tendency to push the FSP's own distinctive contributions to revolutionary tradition into the background.

The same trend was evident in the internal discussion that occupied the party for some months in the spring and summer.

1. In citing the China question as the "key to the international situation" and to the regroupment process in the U.S., Frank pushed the FSP program on the the decisive American questions—the liberation of Blacks and women—into the background, thereby minimizing our differences with the Workers World Party, with whom he was then carrying on a flirtation.

2. The entire dispute over regroupment and the nature of the party ("a party" vs. "the party") revealed an oppositional current that only became fully explicit much later, after our former comrades had launched out on their own.

They were looking for a "regroupment" in which they could find a comfortable home as a left wing of a larger, broader organization; we saw the whole regroupment process as a more protracted and complex one.

For us, the FSP would necessarily be *the* party for some time, and would cede that claim *only* to a new, nationwide, Leninist party that could rightfully

assume the task of leading the American Revolution.

3. In the election campaign disputes, the differences that emerged between the majority comrades and the candidate concerned the latter's unwillingness to stress the program that had been agreed upon, while the opposition, unconcerned with this major political problem, concentrated their efforts on fomenting organizational impediments to effective prosecution of the campaign.

#### The Decisive Woman Question

These examples of behavior were symptomatic of a general tendency in the opposition, whose members were drawing away from a sharp definition of the party program and from bolshevik political and organizational concepts.

Nevertheless, up to the final crisis, the opposition was never fully unified.

There was always some wavering and some crossing of lines, and a few comrades tried to remain aloof from both of the crystallizing tendencies.

The decisive question that finally drove all the disparate elements together was—the Woman Question.

And here again, the opposition's attitude toward the party program was expressed not in open ideological confrontation, but in personal and organizational conflicts.

The opposition would not recognize a Woman Question inside the party—only a "Clara Question." It was Clara, the leading spokesperson of the party majority, who became the figure upon whom all the various elements that comprised the opposition eventually focused their hostility.

There had always been male chauvinism within the party, which Clara had usually successfully overridden with the cooperation of the rest of the old party leadership.

But now she was appearing as the leader of the party majority *against* her former male colleagues. This independent and decisive leadership from a woman was too much for some comrades to take.

This explained the fantastic success of the anti-Clara campaign among some of the male comrades who tended to stand with the bolshevik majority on almost every *other* question.

What had been a latent, half-expressed tendency was transformed into a raging disease, and the final crisis in the dispute between Clara and Kirk was enough to bring it out into the open.

When disciplinary action was finally taken against Kirk, the entire party faced a decisive test.

Principle required solidarity with Clara in the face of Kirk's open scabbery on the Woman Question. The majority passed the test. Kirk was expelled, and his expulsion ratified. *Thus the party reaffirmed in practice its theoretical position on the Woman Question, and made clear to all concerned that the FSP regarded it as a fundamental, first-class political issue.*

The minority could not pass the test.

Not only were they unwilling to stand by their

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principles on this question, they were unable to live a minute longer inside a party that would. In walking out, they made clear that for them the Woman Question was at best a second-class question, and that they would not tolerate its elevation into a guide to living practice.

The opposition's hypocrisy on the Woman Question—a real backwardness, which they attempted to conceal with demagogic rhetoric—was the decisive factor impelling them into hurried flight from the party ranks.

This was their first definite, organized break with the party program; it was not to be their last. From the moment they deserted the party, the oppositionists followed a political course that led them further and further from Marxism.

### A Historic Parallel

The Woman Question was not the sum and substance of the differences in the party, but it was the *barometer* of the opposition's political degeneration, the weather vane pointing out the direction of their political drift. In exposing their incapacity to deal honestly with this fundamental issue, the deserters signalled their growing inability to deal with any question in the bolshevik manner—clearly, incisively, and forthrightly, on the grounds of principle.

The split in the FSP was unusual in form, but not without parallel in the history of the Marxist movement.

A similar struggle, the famous bolshevik-menshevik split in which Lenin first emerged as the leader of the revolutionary movement in Russia, was fought out in the Russian Social-Democratic Party in 1903.

Although the Russian party was a great, mass organization and ours is a small revolutionary nucleus, the parallels between the problems faced in both cases are too striking to be ignored, and the struggle in the FSP appears in some respects as a microcosm of the vast earlier struggle.

The Russian Social-Democracy was a party still in its formative phase, struggling to unify itself around a program and defend its political integrity as a vanguard detachment of a much broader radical

movement. And the Russian revolutionists, like ourselves, very soon faced an organizational crisis over what appeared to be trivial, secondary matters.

*The crisis came to a head at the 1903 Congress of the party over (1) the composition of the editorial board of Iskra (the central party organ), and (2) a minor difference of wording in two drafts of the statutes defining membership requirements.*

On the first issue, Lenin had simply proposed a reduction in the size of *Iskra's* editorial board to weed out the less effective and productive members of the original team in the interests of efficiency.

But, to quote Deutscher (*The Prophet Armed*), "considerations of efficiency clashed, as they often do, with acquired rights and sentiment." The future mensheviks sensed in Lenin's simple proposal a deep, dark conspiracy to wrest the hegemony in the Russian revolutionary movement away from its traditional leadership.

This dispute immediately threw into relief the "minor" differences in the drafts of the membership statutes. It became clear that the difference between the two drafts was hardly trivial, for it concerned two basically different definitions of the party.

Lenin had proposed that the primary requirement of party membership be activity as a *member of a local organization* of the party, while Martov, future leader of the mensheviks, proposed that it be activity *under the direction* of a local party organization. Lenin was looking toward a tight, disciplined formation in which each member would be bound to the revolutionary collective by a close, integral connection with its local organization. Martov, on the other hand, envisaged a looser association, with the individual member's responsibilities very vaguely defined, leaving each member free from regular control and supervision by the local organization.

The question of *priorities*—efficiency in carrying out the party line versus sentimental considerations, and the *nature of the party*—these were the split issues that divided bolshevik from menshevik.

As we now know, the differences that lay behind these disputes over technical questions were anything but superficial. They set in motion a long process of political dispute, and the Russian Social-Democracy broke up into two camps: the bolsheviks, who stood at the head of the 1917 revolution, and the mensheviks, who were obstacles in its way.

### Lessons of the FSP Split

Our party also faced its first crisis very early in its existence, and the problem was similar.

Once a party has declared its independence and come out into the open, it is forced to define itself, and this means first and foremost defining its attitude toward its own politics.

Even the *best* politics, so long as they remain on paper or are confined to discussions within closed circles, have no definitive existence. They must be carried out into the real world and put to work as operating principles of a living organization.

*This* is the final test of the seriousness with which an organization regards its politics. This determines what its real program is.

Such was the test our party faced during 1967. In withstanding the test—a split not with old enemies, but with those who had been longtime friends and comrades—we ended the formative process set in motion a year and a half earlier, when the FSP came into being.

Only after the split did the FSP finally stand by itself, firmly rooted in its own dynamic principles.

### VI. 1968: FSP Condition and Performance

**T**he party's salient accomplishment of 1967 was to maintain its integrity in the face of a menshevik challenge from within its own ranks.

In so doing, it saved itself from an opportunistic drift into centrism, reformism and eventual liquidation.

Still, the lifesaving struggle exacted heavy costs. The bitter and protracted internecine conflict seriously drained the energies of the party cadres and prevented significant party growth during the fight. The year ended with some major tasks uncompleted, only one basic document published, and new sources of growth, opened up by the election campaign, unexploited.

With the new year, the party had new tasks, and the first was political and organizational survival.

With the membership at virtual half strength, substantial scaling down and alteration of perspectives were required. The deserters not only absconded with party correspondence and

documents, but stole the \$300.00 Publication Fund.

We had to settle the ideological account of the split, clarifying our position and tracing out the inner logic of our opponents' evolution.

We had to maintain public functioning and momentum, as well as continued contact with and intervention in the mass movement.

We had to prevent the usurpation of the name of the FSP by the mensheviks.

And we had to strengthen the party, tempering and toughening the small cadre for the great responsibilities it now had to shoulder alone, while augmenting our slender forces through intensified contact and recruitment work.

### Performance Analysis

The 1968 record is characterized by some successes, some unfinished tasks, some projects that never got off the ground, much exploratory activity in probing the possibilities of alliances and united efforts with other groupings, and the eventual strengthening of our identity, mode of operation, and course.

1. Our first job was to *explain the split* to our friends and periphery.

We accomplished this slowly and painstakingly, but effectively, in that we made our position succinct and programmatic. We refused to borrow a leaf from the book of our opponents' style and label the dispute as "the Frank question" or "the Kirk question," etc. Instead, in a series of detailed open letters to our former comrades in response to their demands and charges, we opened a political debate on issues of principle and program.

We hoped thereby to engage them in open ideological debate, but this they fled from, preferring to circulate their version of events privately.

It was difficult for us to convince many people, in that period, of the validity of our course, given the general hostility toward our conception of the Woman Question as a major political issue that required *independent mass organization*.

Also, there prevailed great resistance in the student movement to *any* organizational forms geared toward serious revolutionary action and pointing in the direction of a vanguard party.

Nevertheless, we forced every local radical grouping into an examination of these issues and a general consideration of their role and import, thereby definitively establishing ourselves as the hard-core proletarian tendency and the rightful inheritors of the party's name.

2. We were highly successful in keeping the party *publicly visible* through forums and socials.

A forum series on Afro-American History in February and March 1968 featured an impressive roster of speakers and was widely publicized. The series built up to a very good attendance.

A long summer series on the history of women's emancipation, jointly sponsored with Radical Women, was so successful that it contributed to this very history. It was a major breakthrough in bringing the woman question as a serious, first-rank political subject before a new generation of radicals. The speakers roster, presentations, and planning and implementing were all excellent. The series was an important learning experience for a substantial sector of the local movement.

Our winter series, which evaluated the politics of the New Left, was less popular from the standpoint of attendance, due to the sharpening of political differences between ourselves and the mass of student militants in the wake of the national elections. But the programmatic differentiations that we explored and clarified in the course of the series were political accomplishments of the first order, in terms of sharpening the theory and character of the party.

3. *Our headquarters, Freeway Hall*, was an invaluable resource, and our utilization of it guaranteed our right to the party's name once and for all in the eyes of the general radical public. It was also an important financial resource, as income from increasing rentals provided the decisive margin of solvency.

We did not, however, use the hall as a political resource to the extent that we could have, being particularly deficient in keeping the bookstore open regularly and publicizing it. We thereby deprived ourselves of an important arena for political contact and dissemination of literature.

4. Our work in the *mass movement* engendered very mixed results, as a consequence of the relation between the objective thrust of the movement as a whole and the internal condition of the party.

The dominant feature of the movement over the past several years has been the increasing radicalism of Black and white youth.

During 1967, this process accelerated suddenly and qualitatively.



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Early in the year, the student movement, with SDS in the lead, proclaimed a shift from "protest to resistance." Coincident with this was a piecemeal eruption of local draft resistance groups around the country, initiated by Black youth but soon taken up by white students. Explosions in the Black ghetto over the summer were followed by a massive influx of Black Student Unions across the country, and the first thrust of the Black Panther Party toward national prominence.

The opening months of 1968 saw a continued deepening of the process of radicalization.

SDS mushroomed on campuses across the country. A new third-party movement, initiated with the formation of the Peace and Freedom Party of California, began to attract young people seeking an independent political outlet for their radicalism. The draft resistance movement began to manifest signs of outgrowing its initial formlessness and developing a broader political and social consciousness. A nascent women's movement appeared from out of the student milieu. The Black Panthers proclaimed their intention to form a Black revolutionary vanguard with a socialist ideology.

These national developments were reflected locally. From a position as an isolated backwater on the national scene, Seattle was being drawn into the maelstrom of a reviving radical movement.

### New Left Convulsions

At the beginning of the year, the FSP was apparently in a very good position with respect to the new radical movement. We had broad connections in SDS, good relations with young Black militant leaders, and a fraction of two exerting considerable influence in Draft Resistance.

When a group of young women from SDS became interested in forming a radical women's organization, they turned immediately to our comrades for assistance in public speeches, programmatic guidance and organizational collaboration.

This era of good relations did not last long. In a very short time, our friendly and cooperative relations with the New Left on various fronts gave way to increasing divergences and friction.

Seeing our own program as the most advanced expression of the anti-war movement, we cast ourselves in the role of leadership of a potential revolutionary left wing in Draft Resistance, devoting much of our energies to this enterprise.

When the moment of decision for the left wing arrived—a choice between principled politics or endless clique maneuvering as the pathway for decision-making—the left wing promptly collapsed, crystallizing into a conscious counter-left wing.

This is an old story in politics, but one which newer comrades seem to have to learn through personal experiences. We made no opportunistic adaptations to the situation, and the party fraction emerged from the battlefield with an enhanced understanding of the interrelations of mass movement building and party building, and the need to integrate the two processes. This was a tribute to their growing maturity and ability to profit from experience and party guidance.

The fraction learned it had been overly sanguine and optimistic; it should have seen its role more clearly as one of swimming against the stream consciously and energetically, paying more attention to the needs of the party and utilizing the party as a center for pulling together the best individuals in the mass movement.

The chief lesson derived was to relearn once again that the party needs to retain its own separate existence outside the mass movement, in opposition to it when necessary, and always available to the most advanced elements for advice, assistance and the opportunity for membership.

By late summer, both DR and SDS were driving in an anarchistic direction, characterized by deliberate organizational formlessness, irresponsible adventurism and unbridled subjectivism. Concurrent with this was an increasing hostility to "Old Left"—that is, Marxist—concepts of class line, program, organizational structure and procedures, and methods of delineating strategy and tactics.

In this atmosphere, we were forced into increasing isolation, and finally decided to withdraw from active organizational participation in the student arena in order to concentrate on educational work with individuals not cemented into the politics of prolonged adolescence and the cult of spontaneity.

### The Women's Movement

Our sojourn with the New Left in Radical Women had similar results, although in a different form.

From its inception, we were very favorably disposed toward this fledgling organization we had helped to initiate. Its very formation was historic and dramatic, an exciting validation of our long-

proclaimed but lonely stance on the woman question.

Here seemed to be the best field for close cooperation with a key sector of the New Left—its young women.

Even before it was really off the ground, Radical Women acquired a name for itself through its forums and actions. Nevertheless, it was not able to clearly define itself in matters of program, organization or tactics.

Our attempts to orient the organization in a pro-socialist, working-class direction based on a serious organizational foundation were met with discomfort, outrage, clandestine maneuvering, chronic attempts to ignore or violate decisions, growing hostility, the withdrawal of some members and finally division in three directions.

Our comrades, together with a few sympathizers, were left in possession of the organization, while the New Left and single-issue types formed two new groups.

One of these, the "Women's Majority Union," oriented blatantly toward middle-class suburban housewives who "want to kill their husbands" ("the real battlefield!").

They announced their devotion to an ongoing mystical soul-search for their true natures and a quest for a fully "liberated" lifestyle in this society—liberated basically from wage-labor, children, and the responsibilities of life.

They renounced connection with the ghetto movement, the labor movement, and the general movement for social revolution, preferring to work for women's rights in an exclusively reformist and sensationalist fashion.

In their urgency to build a mass movement, they resorted to red-baiting, personal attacks and unrestrained malice, so fearful were they of being branded a "red front" as a result of guilt-by-association with revolutionaries.

The other split-off tendency from Radical Women formed itself into a "Women's Liberation Committee" of the SDS and the Peace and Freedom Party, and later of SDS alone, after the demise of the PFP.

This group spun off in the opposite direction, opposing the need for the businesslike organization of an *independent* women's movement and adopting an ultra-left course, resulting from an erroneous belief that the answer to reformism is a sectarian contempt for the struggle for limited and partial objectives. They, too, hysterically resisted a structured organization.

Our attempts at close collaboration with some sections of the New Left resulted in a polarization of ideologies and methods. Discussion within the movement was thereby raised to a much higher level than previously, which is always the case with clear-cut splits, as every Leninist knows! Issues were clarified and positions taken, and the in-fighting among the women radicals in particular had a significant impact upon the student movement as a whole, which was struggling on a national plane to resolve these very differences.

### PFP and Black Panthers

The Peace and Freedom Party displayed some initial promise, but it soon became apparent that it was unable and unwilling to advance programmatic past its first burst of enthusiasm and beyond its socially narrow and classless student base.

A large outpouring of radical sentiment of various hues coalesced into a loose association in this party, but no concise program of clear political direction emerged, and the party took shape in shapelessness—as an indeterminate, all-inclusive, Peoples Front type of action-apparatus, composed of equal parts of radicalism, reformism, revolution, progressive capitalism, and socialism.

Our unwillingness to enter the party and "help shape its course" flowed from the impermissibility, in principle, of supporting a United Liberals, Radicals, and Socialists type of political stew.

We could not have altered its course, given its basic composition and direction, and we could not have operated as a minority within it without compromising that very principled approach to electoral coalitions which we had upheld for so long against the opportunism of the former comrades who had defected from our party.

We did give critical support to the two Black candidates of the PFP—Eldridge Cleaver and Flo Ware; nevertheless, our persistent refusal to enter or endorse the PFP organization created considerable friction between us and most of our younger friends who had rushed into the "new" and supposedly non-Stalinistic PFP as soon as it was launched.

They failed to see that only the faces had changed; despite definite and welcome improvements in the planks of the Black struggle, the labor movement, women's rights, and independent political action, the

fundamental and overriding character of the program was its appeal for multi-class support on supra-class issues—i.e., the Peoples Front against war, fascism, poverty, etc.

PFP was an anti-monopoly, anti-military/industrial coalition—anti-establishment, not anti-capitalist. This type of program topping a middle-class/student base spells precisely that kind of mish-mash electoral coalition which Leninists deplore, despite its apparent radicalism and super-militancy.

The PFP was a Stalinist *type* of party, even though few of its adherents realize it to this day, and are furious at the allegation!

But friendship is friendship, and politics is politics, and a political party like FSP must choose.

Friction between us and PFP increased with our active support of the Black Panther Party electoral campaign.

The local Panthers were trying to free themselves from the injunction to effect an electoral coalition with the PFP imposed on them by Cleaver's candidacy on the PFP ticket. This questionable move by Cleaver deprived his own party of the drama, momentum and influence it needed to build its own ranks through electoral activity. The local BPP had only one candidate in the field, and it was incumbent upon us to help assure his ballot status and mobilize electoral support on his behalf.

This campaign was the *decisive* action in Seattle, crucial for the Black freedom movement and therefore crucial for the entire movement—yet Socialist Workers Party was running a counter-candidate to Cleaver, PFP had Cleaver on its slate, and both parties were straining mightily on behalf of their own campaigns.

Only FSP took upon itself as a primary responsibility the task of assisting the local BPP campaign, providing publicity, Nominating Petition signers, technical assistance, etc.

The non-self-seeking on our part was recognized by the Panthers, who included our spokeswoman on their roster of Nominating Convention speakers, and we were generously afforded the opportunity to engage in a meaningful and innovative dialogue on feminism with them and the audience at that event.

The highlight of our supportive activities was the mass rally called on their behalf and in their defense by an ad hoc unity committee initiated by our comrades in Radical Women and composed of virtually every radical grouping in town.

To achieve this hugely impressive and effective united front against police harassment in the ghetto was not only a herculean task, in which we succeeded, but a politically expensive one. By virtue of our pressure on Radical Women, PFP, SDS and others to support the mass meeting, we incurred resentment and annoyance.

Nevertheless, we would be happy to do it again for the Black freedom movement, which would otherwise be ignored by white radicals stewing in their own organizational juices and self-concerns.

### Performance Evaluation

By the end of 1968, the FSP stood out as a distinctly independent, unique and determined tendency amid the myriad of local and national factions and groupings within the radical movement.

We ended up organizationally alone and politically together, a rather remarkable achievement for our small cadre of hardheads attacked consistently and sometimes hysterically from all sides because of our intransigence combined with flexibility—a dialectical approach to strategy still unabsorbed by old and new left alike.

By refusing to sacrifice principle in exchange for popularity, we had earned some outright hatred from those who demanded our participation and collaboration in *their* projects on *their* terms.

But the lifespan of our alliances was dictated by the *limits* of our capability for compromise and concession. Our capability was very broad, but limits we did insist on. This earned us general, if infuriated, respect.

We failed to write enough, publish enough, hold enough public meetings, complete all of our documents and projects in time, and follow through consistently on administrative responsibilities. But we significantly improved our functioning in some areas, and, most important, we emerged from this year of difficulty, contradictions and challenge with a vastly expanded self-knowledge and a new capacity for realistic judgments and decisions. ■

The next installment, to appear in the Winter *Freedom Socialist*, assesses the state of the movement in 1969—the New Left, the Black rebellion, the G.I. movement, women's liberation—and charts the FSP's political and organizational tasks for that momentous period.



# VIVA NICARAGUA!

**The streets ran red with blood before U.S.-backed butcher Somoza could be run out of Nicaragua by the insurrectionary population. Today, red banners wave in Managua to proclaim the first overthrow of a Latin American dictator since Batista fled Cuba. But the collaboration of the Sandinistas with the capitalist class spells danger for the future of a free Nicaragua.**

by Sam Deaderick

**I**t is July 21, 1979. 100,000 cheering celebrants throng the newly renamed Plaza of the Revolution in Managua to welcome the

new Government of National Reconstruction.

Hated dictator Anastasio Somoza Debayle has fled to Miami, along with the top command of his National Guard, and 46 years of bloody rule by the U.S.-supported Somoza family is at an end.

Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) banners flutter in the breeze. The streets that were so recently filled with gunfire and the groans of the dying explode with laughter, song, and tears of happiness as the members of the new government arrive and are inaugurated.

For the first time since Fidel Castro's victorious rebel army marched into Havana 20 years ago, a popular uprising has toppled a Latin American rightwing dictatorship and seriously weakened—and threatened—the economic and political stranglehold of imperialism over Latin America.

But the political future of Nicaragua is uncertain. Participation in the new government ranges from Sandinista guerrillas to major industrialists, and the tentative, uneasy alliance of irreconcilable classes makes any long-term stability impossible.

## The tyrant Somoza

Virtually the entire population of the country—poor peasants, urban workers,

small shopkeepers, magnates of big business—united in opposition to the tyrant Somoza.

Through an interlocking network of family ties, the Somoza dynasty, installed by Yankee armed forces in the 1930s, owned up to 60% of all arable land. The family completely controlled all major industry and the political, military, and judicial apparatus.

Educated at West Point, Somoza exercised power through a highly-trained National Guard, who, in return for special privileges, demonstrated fierce loyalty to

fighting. Civilians were routinely shot as suspected FSLN sympathizers and residential areas were bombed and napalmed.

The population fought heroically. FSLN forces were strengthened by the full-scale participation of armed women, and young children took up arms.

40,000 were killed in the fighting and 600,000 left homeless. Factories were destroyed, crops ruined, and millions of dollars funneled out of the country by Somoza, his henchmen, and major capitalists who feared both Somoza and the revolutionaries.

The new government faces an enormous task of reconstruction; it must increase agricultural production and patch together the shattered economy.

## What next?

The program of the new government calls for "democratic rule, justice, and social progress."

"Organization and operation of political parties without ideological discrimination" is guaranteed, except for the "Somocismos."

One of the major leaders of the "Prolonged People's War" tendency of the FSLN has said that "private property will be respected. The only thing the revolutionary state has taken over to administer is the property of Somoza and his henchmen. The industrialists can keep calm."

But industrialists never keep calm in revolutionary situations. Nicaraguan workers and peasants will soon realize that Somoza was only the most brutal of their oppressors and that the revolution has only just begun.

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Marcel Hatch/Freedom Socialist

the regime and brutalized, tortured, and murdered the citizenry on command.

## Civil war

The FSLN uprising against Somoza in September 1978, was defeated by the National Guard with U.S. and Israeli-supplied weapons. The FSLN regrouped and launched the final offensive in May which brought down the government.

The National Guard demonstrated unprecedented barbarity during the

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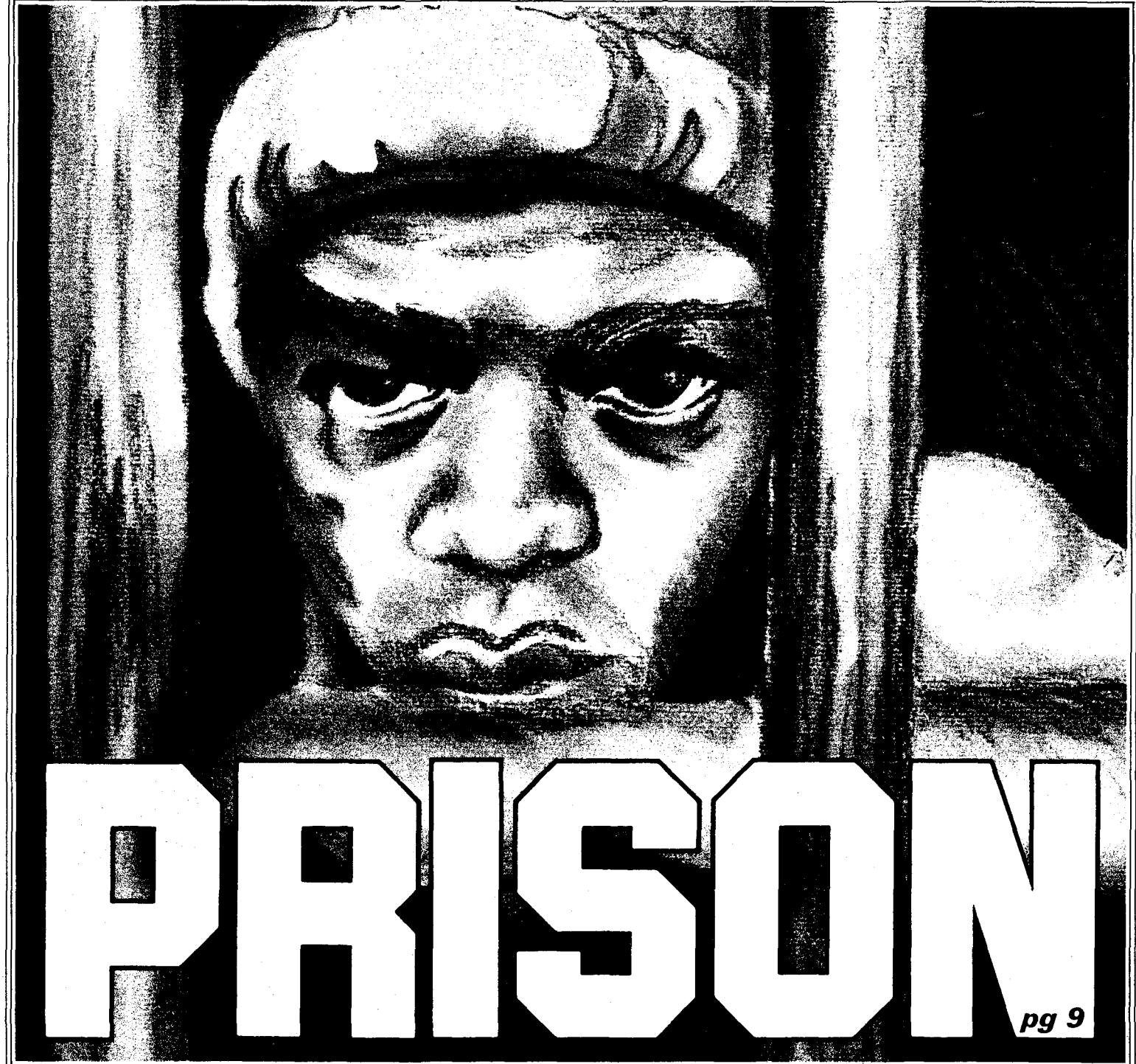
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